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Wives and Daughters.

AN EVERY-DAY STORY.

CHAPTER XLVI.

HOLLINGFORD GOSSIPS.



Y dear Molly, why didn't you come and dine with us? I said to sister I would come and scold you well. Oh, Mr. Osborne Hamley, is that you?" and a look of mistaken intelligence at the tête-à-tête she had disturbed came so perceptibly over Miss Phœbe's face that Molly caught Osborne's sympathetic eye, and both smiled at the notion.

"I'm sure I—well! one must sometimes—I see our dinner would have been—" Then she recovered herself into a connected sentence. "We only just heard of Mrs. Gibson's having a fly from the 'George,' because sister sent our Betty to pay for a couple of rabbits Tom Ostler had snared, (I hope we shan't be taken up for poachers, Mr. Osborne—snaring doesn't require a licence, I believe?) and she heard he was gone off with the fly to the Towers with your dear mamma; for Coxe who drives the fly in general has sprained his ankle. We had just finished dinner, but when Betty said Tom Ostler would not be back till night I said, 'Why, there's that poor dear girl left all alone by herself, and her

mother such a friend of ours,'—when she was alive, I mean. But I'm sure I'm glad I'm mistaken."

Osborne said,—“I came to speak to Mr. Gibson, not knowing he had gone to London, and Miss Gibson kindly gave me some of her lunch. I must go now.”

“O dear! I am so sorry,” fluttered out Miss Phœbe, “I disturbed you; but it was with the best intentions. I always was mal-apropos from a child.” But Osborne was gone before she had finished her apologies. Before he left, his eyes met Molly's with a strange look of yearning farewell that struck her at the time, and that she remembered strongly afterwards. “Such a nice suitable thing, and I came in the midst, and spoilt it all. I am sure you're very kind, my dear, considering—”

“Considering what, my dear Miss Phœbe? If you are conjecturing a love affair between Mr. Osborne Hamley and me, you never were more mistaken in your life. I think I told you so once before. Please do believe me.”

“Oh, yes! I remember. And somehow sister got it into her head it was Mr. Preston. I recollect.”

“One guess is just as wrong as the other,” said Molly, smiling, and trying to look perfectly indifferent, but going extremely red from annoyance at the mention of Mr. Preston's name. It was very difficult for her to keep up any conversation, for her heart was full of Osborne—his changed appearance, his melancholy words of foreboding, and his confidences about his wife—French, Catholic, servant. Molly could not help trying to piece these strange facts together by imaginations of her own, and found it very hard work to attend to kind Miss Phœbe's unceasing patter. She came up to the point, however, when the voice ceased; and could recall, in a mechanical manner, the echo of the last words, which from both Miss Phœbe's look, and the dying accent that lingered in Molly's ear, she perceived to be a question. Miss Phœbe was asking her if she would go out with her? She was going to Grinstead's, the bookseller of Hollingford; who, in addition to his regular business, was the agent for the Hollingford Book Society, received their subscriptions, kept their accounts, ordered their books from London, and, on payment of a small salary, allowed the Society to keep their volumes on shelves in his shop. It was the centre of news, and the club, as it were, of the little town. Everybody who pretended to gentility in the place belonged to it. It was a test of gentility, indeed, rather than of education or a love of literature. No shopkeeper would have thought of offering himself as a member, however great his general intelligence and love of reading; while it boasted upon the list of subscribers most of the county families in the neighbourhood, some of whom subscribed to the Hollingford Book Society as a sort of duty belonging to their station, without often using their privilege of reading the books: while there were residents in the little town, such as Mrs. Goodenough, who privately thought reading a great waste of time, that might be much better employed in sewing, and knit-

ting, and pastry-making, but who nevertheless belonged to it as a mark of station, just as these good, motherly women would have thought it a terrible come-down in the world if they had not had a pretty young servant-maid to fetch them home from the tea-parties at night. At any rate, Grinstead's was a very convenient place for a lounge. In that view of the book society every one agreed. Molly went upstairs to get ready to accompany Miss Phœbe; and on opening one of her drawers she saw Cynthia's envelope, containing the notes she owed to Mr. Preston, carefully sealed up like a letter. This was what Molly had so unwillingly promised to deliver—the last final stroke to the affair. Molly took it up, hating it. For a time she had forgotten it; and now it was here, facing her, and she must try and get rid of it. She put it into her pocket for the chances of the walk and the day, and fortune for once seemed to befriend her; for, on their entering Grinstead's shop, in which two or three people were now, as always, congregated, making play of examining the books, or business of writing down the titles of new works in the order-book, there was Mr. Preston. He bowed as they came in. He could not help that; but, at the sight of Molly, he looked as ill-tempered and out of humour as a man well could do. She was connected in his mind with defeat and mortification; and besides, the sight of her called up what he desired now above all things to forget; namely, the deep conviction received through Molly's simple earnestness, of Cynthia's dislike to him. If Miss Phœbe had seen the scowl upon his handsome face, she might have undeceived her sister in her suppositions about him and Molly. But Miss Phœbe, who did not consider it quite maidenly to go and stand close to Mr. Preston, and survey the shelves of books in such close proximity to a gentleman, found herself an errand at the other end of the shop, and occupied herself in buying writing-paper. Molly fingered her valuable letter, as it lay in her pocket; did she dare to cross over to Mr. Preston, and give it to him, or not? While she was still undecided, shrinking always just at the moment when she thought she had got her courage up for action, Miss Phœbe, having finished her purchase, turned round, and after looking a little pathetically at Mr. Preston's back, said to Molly in a whisper—"I think we'll go to Johnson's now, and come back for the books in a little while." So across the street to Johnson's they went; but no sooner had they entered the draper's shop, than Molly's conscience smote her for her cowardice, and loss of a good opportunity. "I'll be back directly," said she, as soon as Miss Phœbe was engaged with her purchases; and Molly ran across to Grinstead's, without looking either to the right or the left; she had been watching the door, and she knew that no Mr. Preston had issued forth. She ran in; he was at the counter now, talking to Grinstead himself; Molly put the letter into his hand, to his surprise, and almost against his will, and turned round to go back to Miss Phœbe. At the door of the shop stood Mrs. Goodenough, arrested in the act of entering, staring, with her round eyes, made

still rounder and more owl-like by spectacles, to see Molly Gibson giving Mr. Preston a letter, which he, conscious of being watched, and favouring underhand practices habitually, put quickly into his pocket, unopened. Perhaps, if he had had time for reflection he would not have scrupled to put Molly to open shame, by rejecting what she so eagerly forced upon him.

There was another long evening to be got through with Mrs. Gibson; but on this occasion there was the pleasant occupation of dinner, which took up at least an hour; for it was one of Mrs. Gibson's fancies—one which Molly chafed against—to have every ceremonial gone through in the same stately manner for two as for twenty. So, although Molly knew full well, and her stepmother knew full well, and Maria knew full well, that neither Mrs. Gibson nor Molly touched dessert, it was set on the table with as much form as if Cynthia had been at home, who delighted in almonds and raisins; or Mr. Gibson been there, who never could resist dates, although he always protested against "persons in their station of life having a formal dessert set out before them every day."

And Mrs. Gibson herself apologized as it were to Molly to-day, in the same words she had often used to Mr. Gibson,—“It's no extravagance, for we need not eat it—I never do. But it looks well, and makes Maria understand what is required in the daily life of every family of position.”

All through the evening Molly's thoughts wandered far and wide, though she managed to keep up a show of attention to what Mrs. Gibson was saying. She was thinking of Osborne, and his abrupt, half-finished confidence, his ill-looks; she was wondering when Roger would come home, and longing for his return, as much (she said to herself) for Osborne's sake as for her own. And then she checked herself. What had she to do with Roger? Why should she long for his return? It was Cynthia who was doing this; only somehow he was such a true friend to Molly, that she could not help thinking of him as a staff and a stay in the troublous times which appeared to lie not far ahead—this evening. Then Mr. Preston and her little adventure with him came uppermost. How angry he looked! How could Cynthia have liked him even enough to get into this abominable scrape, which was, however, all over now! And so she ran on in her fancies and imaginations, little dreaming that that very night much talk was going on not half-a-mile from where she sat sewing, that could prove that the “scrape” (as she called it, in her girlish phraseology) was not all over.

Scandal sleeps in the summer, comparatively speaking. Its nature is the reverse of that of the dormouse. Warm ambient air, loiterings abroad, gardenings, flowers to talk about, and preserves to make, soothed the wicked imp to slumber in the parish of Hollingford in summer-time. But when evenings grew short, and people gathered round the fires, and put their feet in a circle—not on the fenders, that was not allowed—then was the time for confidential conversation! Or in the pauses allowed for the tea-trays to circulate among the card-tables—when those who were

peaceably inclined tried to stop the warm discussions about "the odd trick," and the rather wearisome feminine way of "shouldering the crutch, and showing how fields were won"—small crumbs and scraps of daily news came up to the surface, such as "Martindale has raised the price of his best joints a halfpenny in the pound;" or "it's a shame of Sir Harry to order in another book on farriery into the book society; Phæbe and I tried to read it, but really there is no general interest in it;" or, "I wonder what Mr. Ashton will do, now Nancy is going to be married! Why, she has been with him these seventeen years! It's a very foolish thing for a woman of her age to be thinking of matrimony; and so I told her, when I met her in the market-place this morning!"

So said Miss Browning on the night in question; her hand of cards lying by her on the puce baize-covered table, while she munched the rich pound-cake of a certain Mrs. Dawes, lately come to inhabit Hollingford.

"Matrimony's not so bad as you think for, Miss Browning," said Mrs. Goodenough, standing up for the holy estate into which she had twice entered. "If I had ha' seen Nancy, I should ha' given her my mind very different. It's a great thing to be able to settle what you'll have for dinner, without never a one interfering with you."

"If that's all!" said Miss Browning, drawing herself up, "I can do that; and, perhaps, better than a woman who has a husband to please."

"No one can say as I didn't please my husbands—both on 'em, though Jeremy was tickler in his tastes than poor Harry Beaver. But as I used to say to 'em, 'Leave the victual to me; it's better for you than knowing what's to come beforehand. The stomach likes to be taken by surprise.' And neither of 'em ever repented 'em of their confidence. You may take my word for it, beans and bacon will taste better (and Mr. Ashton's Nancy in her own house) than all the sweetbreads and spring chickens she's been a-doing for him this seventeen years. But if I chose I could tell you of something as would interest you all a deal more than old Nancy's marriage to a widower with nine children—only as the young folks themselves is meeting in private, clandestine-like, it's perhaps not for me to tell their secrets."

"I'm sure I don't want to hear of clandestine meetings between young men and young women," said Miss Browning, throwing up her head. "It's disgrace enough to the people themselves, I consider, if they enter on a love affair without the proper sanction of parents. I know public opinion has changed on the subject; but when poor Gratia was married to Mr. Byerley, he wrote to my father without ever having so much as paid her a compliment, or said more than the most trivial and commonplace things to her; and my father and mother sent for her into my father's study, and she said she never was so much frightened in her life,—and they said it was a very good offer, and Mr. Byerley was a very worthy man, and they hoped she would behave properly to him when he came to supper that night. And after that he was allowed to come twice a week

till they were married. My mother and I sate at our work in the bow-window of the Rectory drawing-room, and Gratia and Mr. Byerley at the other end; and my mother always called my attention to some flower or plant in the garden when it struck nine, for that was his time for going. Without offence to the present company, I am rather inclined to look upon matrimony as a weakness to which some very worthy people are prone; but if they must be married, let them make the best of it, and go through the affair with dignity and propriety; or if there are misdoings and clandestine meetings, and such things, at any rate, never let me hear about them! I think it's you to play, Mrs. Dawes. You'll excuse my frankness on the subject of matrimony! Mrs. Goodenough there can tell you I'm a very out-spoken person."

"It's not the out-speaking, it's what you say that goes against me, Miss Browning," said Mrs. Goodenough, affronted, yet ready to play her card as soon as needed. And as for Mrs. Dawes, she was too anxious to get into the genteelst of all (Hollingford) society to object to whatever Miss Browning (who, in right of being a deceased rector's daughter, rather represented the selectest circle of the little town) advocated, celibacy, marriage, bigamy, or polygamy.

So the remainder of the evening passed over without any farther reference to the secret Mrs. Goodenough was burning to disclose, unless a remark made *à propos de rien* by Miss Browning, during the silence of a deal, could be supposed to have connexion with the previous conversation. She said suddenly and abruptly,—

"I don't know what I have done that any man should make me his slave." If she was referring to any prospect of matrimonial danger she saw opening before her fancy, she might have been comforted. But it was a remark of which no one took any notice, all being far too much engaged in the rubber. Only when Miss Browning took her early leave (for Miss Phœbe had a cold, and was an invalid at home), Mrs. Goodenough burst out with—

"Well! now I may speak out my mind, and say as how if there was a slave between us two, when Goodenough was alive, it wasn't me; and I don't think as it was pretty in Miss Browning to give herself such airs on her virginity when there was four widows in the room,—who've had six honest men among 'em for husbands. No offence, Miss Airy!" addressing an unfortunate little spinster, who found herself the sole representative of celibacy now that Miss Browning was gone. "I could tell her of a girl as she's very fond on, who's on the high road to matrimony; and in as cunning a way as ever I heard on; going out at dusk to meet her sweetheart, just as if she was my Betty, or your Jenny. And her name is Molly too,—which, as I have often thought, shows a low taste in them as first called her so; she might as well be a scullery-maid at once. Not that she's picked up anybody common; she's looked about her for a handsome fellow, and a smart young man enough!"

Every one around the table looked curious and intent on the

disclosures being made, except the hostess, Mrs. Dawes, who smiled intelligence with her eyes, and knowingly pursed up her mouth until Mrs. Goodenough had finished her tale. Then she said demurely :

"I suppose you mean Mr. Preston and Miss Gibson?"

"Why, who told you?" said Mrs. Goodenough, turning round upon her in surprise. "You can't say as I did. There's many a Molly in Hollingford, besides her,—though none, perhaps, in such a genteel station in life. I never named her, I'm sure."

"No! But I know. I could tell my tale too," continued Mrs. Dawes.

"No! could you, really?" said Mrs. Goodenough, very curious and a little jealous.

"Yes. My uncle Sheepshanks came upon them in the Park Avenue, —he startled 'em a good deal, he said; and when he taxed Mr. Preston with being with his sweetheart, he didn't deny it."

"Well! Now so much has come out, I'll tell you what I know. Only, ladies, I wouldn't wish to do the girl an unkind turn,—so you must keep what I've got to tell you a secret." Of course they promised; that was easy.

"My Hannah, as married Tom Oakes, and lives in Pearson's Lane, was a-gathering of damsons only about a week ago, and Molly Gibson was a-walking fast down the lane,—quite in a hurry like to meet some one,—and Hannah's little Anna-Maria fell down, and Molly (who's a kind-hearted lass enough) picked her up; so if Hannah had had her doubts before, she had none then."

"But there was no one with her, was there?" asked one of the ladies anxiously, as Mrs. Goodenough stopped to finish her piece of cake, just at this crisis.

"No: I said she looked as if she was going to meet some one,—and by-and-by comes Mr. Preston running out of the wood just beyond Hannah's, and says he, 'A cup of water, please, good woman, for a lady has fainted, or is 'sterical or something.' Now though he didn't know Hannah, Hannah knew him. 'More folks know Tom Fool, than Tom Fool knows,' asking Mr. Preston's pardon; for he's no fool whatever he be. And I could tell you more,—and what I've seed with my own eyes. I seed her give him a letter in Grinstead's shop, only yesterday, and he looked as black as thunder at her, for he seed me if she didn't."

"It's a very suitable kind of thing," said Miss Airy; "why do they make such a mystery of it?"

"Some folks like it," said Mrs. Dawes; "it adds zest to it all, to do their courting underhand."

"Ay, it's like salt to their victual," put in Mrs. Goodenough. "But I didn't think Molly Gibson was one of that sort, I didn't."

"The Gibsons hold themselves very high?" cried Mrs. Dawes, more as an inquiry than an assertion. "Mrs. Gibson has called upon me."

"Ay, you're like to be a patient of the doctor's," put in Mrs. Goodenough.

"She seemed to me very affable, though she is so intimate with the Countess and the family at the Towers; and is quite the lady herself; dines late, I've heard, and everything in style."

"Style! very different style to what Bob Gibson, her husband, was used to when first he came here,—glad of a mutton-chop in his surgery, for I doubt if he'd a fire anywhere else; we called him Bob Gibson then, but none on us dare Bob him now; I'd as soon think o' calling him sweep!"

"I think it looks very bad for Miss Gibson!" said one lady, rather anxious to bring back the conversation to the more interesting present time. But as soon as Mrs. Goodenough heard this natural comment on the disclosures she had made, she fired round on the speaker.

"Not at all bad, and I'll trouble you not to use such a word as that about Molly Gibson, as I've known all her life. It's odd, if you will. I was odd myself as a girl; I never could abide a plate of gathered gooseberries, but I must needs go and skulk behind a bush and gather 'em for myself. It's some folk's taste, though it mayn't be Miss Browning's, who'd have all the courting done under the nose of the family. All as ever I said was that I was surprised at it in Molly Gibson; and that I'd ha' thought it was liker that pretty piece of a Cynthia as they call her; indeed at one time I was ready to swear as it was her Mr. Preston was after. And now, ladies, I'll wish you a very good night. I cannot abide waste; and I'll venture for it Hetty's letting the candle in the lantern run all to grease, instead of putting it out, as I've told her to do, if ever she's got to wait for me."

So with formal dipping curtsies the ladies separated, but not without thanking Mrs. Dawes for the pleasant evening they had had; a piece of old-fashioned courtesy always gone through in those days.

CHAPTER XLVII.

SCANDAL AND ITS VICTIMS.

WHEN Mr. Gibson returned to Hollingsford, he found an accumulation of business waiting for him, and he was much inclined to complain of the consequences of the two days' comparative holiday, which had resulted in over-work for the week to come. He had hardly time to speak to his family, he had so immediately to rush off to pressing cases of illness. But Molly managed to arrest him in the hall, standing there with his great coat held out ready for him to put on, but whispering as she did so—

"Papa! Mr. Osborne Hamley was here to see you yesterday. He looks very ill, and he's evidently frightened about himself."

Mr. Gibson faced about, and looked at her for a moment; but all he said was—

"I'll go and see him; don't tell your mother where I'm gone: you've not mentioned this to her, I hope?"

"No," said Molly, for she had only told Mrs. Gibson of Osborne's call, not of the occasion for it.

"Don't say anything about it: there's no need. Now I think of it, I can't possibly go to-day,—but I will go."

Something in her father's manner disheartened Molly, who had persuaded herself that Osborne's evident illness was partly "nervous," by which she meant imaginary. She had dwelt upon his looks of enjoyment at Miss Phœbe's perplexity, and thought that no one really believing himself to be in danger could have given the merry glances which he had done; but after seeing the seriousness of her father's face, she recurred to the shock she had experienced on first seeing Osborne's changed appearance. All this time Mrs. Gibson was busy reading a letter from Cynthia which Mr. Gibson had brought from London; for every opportunity of private conveyance was seized upon when postage was so high; and Cynthia had forgotten so many things in her hurried packing, that she now sent a list of the clothes which she required. Molly almost wondered that it had not come to her; but she did not understand the sort of reserve that was springing up in Cynthia's mind towards her. Cynthia herself struggled with the feeling, and tried to fight against it by calling herself "ungrateful," but the truth was she believed that she no longer held her former high place in Molly's estimation and she could not help turning away from one who knew things to her discredit. She was fully aware of Molly's prompt decision and willing action, where action was especially disagreeable, on her behalf; she knew that Molly would never bring up the past errors and difficulties; but still the consciousness that the good, straightforward girl had learnt that Cynthia had been guilty of so much underhand work cooled her regard, and restrained her willingness of intercourse. Reproach herself with ingratitude as she would, she could not help feeling glad to be away from Molly; it was awkward to speak to her as if nothing had happened; it was awkward to write to her about forgotten ribbons and laces, when their last conversation had been on such different subjects, and had called out such vehement expressions of feeling. So Mrs. Gibson held the list in her hand, and read out the small fragments of news that were intermixed with notices of Cynthia's requirements.

"Helen cannot be so very ill," said Molly at length, "or Cyn would not want her pink muslin and daisy wreath."

"I don't see that that follows, I'm sure," replied Mrs. Gibson rather sharply. "Helen would never be so selfish as to tie Cynthia to her side, however ill she was. Indeed, I should not have felt that it was my duty to let Cynthia go to London at all, if I had thought she was to be perpetually exposed to the depressing atmosphere of a sick-room. Besides, it must be so good for Helen to have Cynthia coming in with bright pleasant accounts of the parties she has been to—even if Cynthia disliked gaiety I should desire her to sacrifice herself and go out as much as she could, for Helen's sake. My idea of nursing

is that one should not be always thinking of one's own feelings and wishes, but doing those things which will most serve to beguile the weary hours of an invalid. But then so few people have had to consider the subject so deeply as I have done!" Mrs. Gibson here thought fit to sigh before going on with Cynthia's letter. As far as Molly could make any sense out of this rather incoherent epistle, very incoherently read aloud to her, Cynthia was really pleased, and glad to be of use and comfort to Helen, but at the same time very ready to be easily persuaded into the perpetual small gaieties which abounded in her uncle's house in London, even at this dead season of the year. Mrs. Gibson came upon Mr. Henderson's name once, and then went on with a running um-um-um to herself, which sounded very mysterious, but which might as well have been omitted, as all that Cynthia really said about him was, "Mr. Henderson's mother has advised my aunt to consult a certain Dr. Donaldson, who is said to be very clever in such cases as Helen's, but my uncle is not sufficiently sure of the professional etiquette, &c." Then there came a very affectionate, carefully worded message to Molly,—implying a good deal more than was said of loving gratitude for the trouble she had taken in Cynthia's behalf. And that was all; and Molly went away a little depressed; she knew not why.

The operation on Lady Cumnor had been successfully performed, and in a few days they hoped to bring her down to the Towers to recruit her strength in the fresh country air; the case was one which interested Mr. Gibson extremely, and in which his opinion had been proved to be right, in opposition to that of one or two great names in London. The consequence was that he was frequently consulted and referred to during the progress of her recovery; and, as he had much to do in the immediate circle of his Hollingford practice, as well as to write thoughtful letters to his medical brethren in London, he found it difficult to spare the three or four hours necessary to go over to Hamley to see Osborne. He wrote to him, however, begging him to reply immediately and detail his symptoms; and from the answer he received he did not imagine that the case was immediately pressing. Osborne, too, deprecated his coming over to Hamley for the express purpose of seeing him. So the visit was deferred to that more convenient season which is so often too late.

All these days the buzzing gossip about Molly's meetings with Mr. Preston, her clandestine correspondence, the tête-à-tête interviews in lonely places, had been gathering strength, and assuming the positive form of scandal. The simple innocent girl, who walked through the quiet streets without a thought of being the object of mysterious implications, became for a time the unconscious black sheep of the town. Servants heard part of what was said in their mistresses' drawing-rooms, and exaggerated the sayings amongst themselves with the coarse strengthening of expression common amongst uneducated people. Mr. Preston himself became aware that her name was being coupled with his, though hardly to the extent to which the love of excitement and gossip had carried

people's speeches; he chuckled over the mistake, but took no pains to correct it. "It serves her right," said he to himself, "for meddling with other folk's business," and he felt himself avenged for the discomfiture which her menace of appealing to Lady Harriet had caused him, and the mortification he had experienced in learning from her plain-speaking lips, how he had been talked over by Cynthia and herself, with personal dislike on the one side, and evident contempt on the other. Besides, if any denial of Mr. Preston's stirred up an examination as to the real truth, more might come out of his baffled endeavours to compel Cynthia to keep to her engagement to him than he cared to have known. He was angry with himself for still loving Cynthia; loving her in his own fashion, be it understood. He told himself that many a woman of more position and wealth would be glad enough to have him; some of them pretty women too. And he asked himself why he was such a confounded fool as to go on hankering after a penniless girl, who was as fickle as the wind? The answer was silly enough, logically; but forcible in fact. Cynthia was Cynthia, and not Venus herself could have been her substitute. In this one thing Mr. Preston was more really true than many worthy men; who, seeking to be married, turn with careless facility from the unattainable to the attainable, and keep their feelings and fancy tolerably loose till they find a woman who consents to be their wife. But no one would ever be to Mr. Preston what Cynthia had been, and was; and yet he could have stabbed her in certain of his moods. So, Molly, who had come between him and the object of his desire, was not likely to find favour in his sight, or to obtain friendly actions from him.

There came a time—not very distant from the evening at Mrs. Dawes'—when Molly felt that people looked askance at her. Mrs. Goodenough openly pulled her grand-daughter away, when the young girl stopped to speak to Molly in the street, and an engagement which the two had made for a long walk together was cut very short by a very trumpery excuse. Mrs. Goodenough explained her conduct in the following manner to some of her friends:—

"You see, I don't think the worse of a girl for meeting her sweetheart here and there and everywhere, till she gets talked about; but then when she does—and Molly Gibson's name is in everybody's mouth—I think it's only fair to Bessy, who has trusted me with Annabella, not to let her daughter be seen with a lass who has managed her matters so badly, as to set folk talking about her. My maxim is this,—and it's a very good working one, you may depend on't—women should mind what they're about, and never be talked of; and if a woman's talked of, the less her friends have to do with her till the talk has died away, the better. So Annabella is not to have anything to do with Molly Gibson, this visit at any rate."

For a good while the Miss Brownings were kept in ignorance of the evil tongues that whispered hard words about Molly. Miss Browning was known to "have a temper," and by instinct every one who came in contact

with her shrank from irritating that temper by uttering the slightest syllable against the smallest of those creatures over whom she spread the aegis of her love. She would and did reproach them herself; she used to boast that she never spared them: but no one else might touch them with the slightest slur of a passing word. But Miss Phœbe inspired no such terror; the great reason why she did not hear of the gossip against Molly as early as any one, was that, although she was not the rose, she lived near the rose. Besides, she was of so tender a nature that even thick-skinned Mrs. Goodenough was unwilling to say what would give Miss Phœbe pain; and it was the new-comer Mrs. Dawes, who in all ignorance alluded to the town's talk, as to something of which Miss Phœbe must be aware. Then Miss Phœbe poured down her questions, although she protested, even with tears, her total disbelief in all the answers she received. It was a small act of heroism on her part to keep all that she there learnt a secret from her sister Dorothy, as she did for four or five days; till Miss Browning attacked her one evening with the following speech:—

"Phœbe! either you've some reason for puffing yourself out with sighs, or you've not. If you have a reason, it's your duty to tell it me directly; and if you've no reason, you must break yourself of a bad habit that is growing upon you."

"Oh, sister! do you think it is really my duty to tell you? it would be such a comfort; but then I thought I ought not; it will distress you so."

"Nonsense. I am so well prepared for misfortune by the frequent contemplation of its possibility that I believe I can receive any ill news with apparent equanimity and real resignation. Besides, when you said yesterday at breakfast-time that you meant to give up the day to making your drawers tidy, I was aware that some misfortune was impending, though of course I could not judge of its magnitude. Is the Highchester Bank broken?"

"Oh no, sister!" said Miss Phœbe, moving to a seat close to her sister's on the sofa. "Have you really been thinking that! I wish I had told you what I heard at the very first, if you've been fancying that!"

"Take warning, Phœbe, and learn to have no concealments from me. I did think we must be ruined, from your ways of going on; eating no meat at dinner, and sighing continually. And now what is it?"

"I hardly know how to tell you, Dorothy. I really don't."

Miss Phœbe began to cry; Miss Browning took hold of her arm, and gave her a little sharp shake.

"Cry as much as you like when you've told me; but don't cry now, child, when you're keeping me on the tenter hooks."

"Molly Gibson has lost her character, sister. That's it."

"Molly Gibson has done no such thing!" said Miss Browning indignantly. "How dare you repeat such stories about poor Mary's child! Never let me hear you say such things again!"

"I can't help it. Mrs. Dawes told me; and she says it's all over the

town. I told her I did not believe a word of it. And I kept it from you; and I think I should have been really ill if I'd kept it to myself any longer. Oh, sister! what are you going to do?"

For Miss Browning had risen without speaking a word, and was leaving the room in a stately and determined fashion.

"I am going to put on my bonnet and things, and then I shall call upon Mrs. Dawes, and confront her with her lies."

"Oh, don't call them lies, sister; it's such a strong, ugly word. Please call them tallydiddles, for I don't believe he meant any harm. Besides—besides—if they should turn out to be truth! Really, sister, that's the weight on my mind; so many things sounded as if they might be true."

"What things?" said Miss Browning, still standing with judicial erectness of position in the middle of the floor.

"Why—one story was that Molly had given him a letter."

"Who's him? How am I to understand a story told in that silly way?" Miss Browning sat down on the nearest chair, and made up her mind to be patient if she could.

"Him is Mr. Preston. And that must be true; because I missed her from my side when I wanted to ask if she thought blue would look green by candlelight, as the young man said it would, and she had run across the street, and Mrs. Goodenough was just going into the shop, just as she said she was."

Miss Browning's distress was overcoming her anger; so she only said, "Phæbe, I think you'll drive me mad. Do tell me what you heard from Mrs. Dawes in a sensible and coherent manner, for once in your life."

"I'm sure I'm trying with all my might to tell you everything just as it happened."

"What did you hear from Mrs. Dawes?"

"Why, that Molly and Mr. Preston were keeping company just as if she was a maid-servant and he was a gardener; meeting at all sorts of improper times and places, and fainting away in his arms, and out at night together, and writing to each other, and slipping their letters into each other's hands; and that was what I was talking about, sister, for I next door to saw that done once. I saw her with my own eyes run across the street to Grinstead's, where he was, for we had just left him there; with a letter in her hand, too, which was not there when she came back all fluttered and blushing. But I never thought anything of it at the time; but now all the town is talking about it, and crying shame, and saying they ought to be married." Miss Phæbe sank into sobbing again; but was suddenly roused by a good box on her ear. Miss Browning was standing over her almost trembling with passion.

"Phæbe, if ever I hear you say such things again, I'll turn you out of the house that minute."

"I only said what Mrs. Dawes said, and you asked me what it was," replied Miss Phæbe, humbly and meekly. "Dorothy, you should not have done that."

"Never mind whether I should or I shouldn't. That's not the matter in hand. What I've got to decide is how to put a stop to all these lies."

"But, Dorothy, they are not all lies—if you will call them so; I'm afraid some things are true; though I stuck to their being false when Mrs. Dawes told me of them."

"If I go to Mrs. Dawes, and she repeats them to me, I shall slap her face or box her ears I'm afraid, for I couldn't stand tales being told of poor Mary's daughter, as if they were just a stirring piece of news like James Horrock's pig with two heads," said Miss Browning, meditating aloud. "That would do harm instead of good. Phœbe, I'm really sorry I boxed your ears, only I should do it again if you said the same things." Phœbe sat down by her sister, and took hold of one of her withered hands, and began caressing it, which was her way of accepting her sister's expression of regret. "If I speak to Molly, the child will deny it, if she's half as good-for-nothing as they say; and if she's not, she'll only worry herself to death. No, that won't do. Mrs. Goodenough—but she's a donkey; and if I convinced her, she could never convince any one else. No; Mrs. Dawes, who told you, shall tell me, and I'll tie my hands together inside my muff, and bind myself over to keep the peace. And when I've heard what is to be heard, I'll put the matter into Mr. Gibson's hands. That's what I'll do. So it's no use your saying anything against it, Phœbe, for I shan't attend to you."

Miss Browning went to Mrs. Dawes', and began civilly enough to make inquiries about the reports current in Hollingsford about Molly and Mr. Preston; and Mrs. Dawes fell into the snare, and told all the real and fictitious circumstances of the story in circulation, quite unaware of the storm that was gathering and ready to fall upon her as soon as she stopped speaking. But she had not the long habit of reverence for Miss Browning which would have kept so many Hollingsford ladies from justifying themselves if she found fault. Mrs. Dawes stood up for herself and her own veracity, bringing out fresh scandal, which she said she did not believe, but that many did; and adducing so much evidence as to the truth of what she had said and did believe, that Miss Browning was almost quelled, and sat silent and miserable at the end of Mrs. Dawes' justification of herself.

"Well!" she said at length, rising up from her chair as she spoke, "I'm very sorry I've lived till this day; it's a blow to me just as if I had heard of such goings-on in my own flesh and blood. I suppose I ought to apologize to you, Mrs. Dawes, for what I said; but I've no heart to do it to-day. I ought not to have spoken as I did; but that's nothing to this affair, you see."

"I hope you do me the justice to perceive that I only repeated what I had heard on good authority, Miss Browning," said Mrs. Dawes in reply.

"My dear, don't repeat evil on any authority unless you can do some

good by speaking about it," said Miss Browning, laying her hand on Mrs. Dawes' shoulder. "I'm not a good woman, but I know what is good, and that advice is. And now I think I can tell you that I beg your pardon for flying out upon you so; but God knows what pain you were putting me to. You'll forgive me, won't you, my dear?" Mrs. Dawes felt the hand trembling on her shoulder, and saw the real distress of Miss Browning's mind, so it was not difficult to her to grant the requested forgiveness. Then Miss Browning went home, and said but few words to Phœbe, who indeed saw well enough that her sister had heard the reports confirmed, and needed no further explanation of the cause of scarcely-tasted dinner, and short replies, and saddened looks. Presently Miss Browning sate down and wrote a short note. Then she rang the bell, and told the little maiden who answered it to take it to Mr. Gibson, and if he was out to see that it was given to him as soon as ever he came home. And then she went and put on her Sunday cap; and Miss Phœbe knew that her sister had written to ask Mr. Gibson to come and be told of the rumours affecting his daughter. Miss Browning was sadly disturbed at the information she had received, and the task that lay before her; she was miserably uncomfortable to herself and irritable to Miss Phœbe, and the netting-cotton she was using kept continually snapping and breaking from the jerks of her nervous hands. When the knock at the door was heard,—the well-known doctor's knock,—Miss Browning took off her spectacles, and dropped them on the carpet, breaking them as she did so; and then she bade Miss Phœbe leave the room, as if her presence had cast the evil-eye, and caused the misfortune. She wanted to look natural, and was distressed at forgetting whether she usually received him sitting or standing.

"Well!" said he, coming in cheerfully, and rubbing his cold hands as he went straight to the fire, "and what is the matter with us? It's Phœbe, I suppose. I hope none of those old spasms? But, after all, a dose or two will set that to rights."

"Oh! Mr. Gibson, I wish it was Phœbe, or me either!" said Miss Browning, trembling more and more.

He sate down by her patiently, when he saw her agitation, and took her hand in a kind, friendly manner.

"Don't hurry yourself,—take your time. I daresay it's not so bad as you fancy; but we'll see about it. There's a great deal of help in the world, much as we abuse it."

"Mr. Gibson," said she, "it's your Molly I'm so grieved about. It's out now, and God help us both, and the poor child too, for I'm sure she's been led astray, and not gone wrong by her own free will!"

"Molly!" said he, fighting against her words. "What's my little Molly been doing or saying?"

"Oh! Mr. Gibson, I don't know how to tell you. I never would have named it, if I had not been convinced, sorely, sorely against my will."

"At any rate, you can let me hear what you have heard," said he, putting his elbow on the table, and screening his eyes with his hand. "Not that I am a bit afraid of anything you can hear about my girl," continued he. "Only in this little nest of gossip it's as well to know what people are talking about."

"They say—oh! how shall I tell you?"

"Go on, can't you?" said he, removing his hand from his blazing eyes. "I'm not going to believe it, so don't be afraid!"

"But I fear you must believe it. I would not if I could help it. She's been carrying on a clandestine correspondence with Mr. Preston!—"

"Mr. Preston!" exclaimed he.

"And meeting him at all sorts of unseemly places and hours out of doors,—in the dark,—fainting away in his—his arms, if I must speak out. All the town is talking of it." Mr. Gibson's hand was over his eyes again, and he made no sign; so Miss Browning went on, adding touch to touch. "Mr. Sheepshanks saw them together. They have exchanged notes in Grinstead's shop; she ran after him there."

"Be quiet, can't you?" said Mr. Gibson, taking his hand away, and showing his grim set face. "I have heard enough. Don't go on. I said I shouldn't believe it, and I don't. I suppose I must thank you for telling me; but I can't yet."

"I don't want your thanks," said Miss Browning, almost crying. "I thought you ought to know; for though you're married again, I can't forget you were dear Mary's husband once upon a time; and Molly's her child."

"I'd rather not speak any more about it just at present," said he, not at all replying to Miss Browning's last speech. "I may not control myself as I ought. I only wish I could meet Preston, and horsewhip him within an inch of his life. I wish I'd the doctoring of these slanderous gossips. I'd make their tongues lie still for a while. My little girl! What harm has she done them all, that they should go and foul her fair name."

"Indeed, Mr. Gibson, I'm afraid it's all true. I would not have sent for you if I hadn't examined into it. Do ascertain the truth before you do anything violent, such as horsewhipping or poisoning."

With all the *inconsequence* of a man in a passion, Mr. Gibson laughed out, "What have I said about horsewhipping or poisoning? Do you think I'd have Molly's name dragged about the streets in connection with any act of violence on my part. Let the report die away as it arose. Time will prove its falsehood."

"But I don't think it will, and that's the pity of it," said Miss Browning. "You must do something, but I don't know what."

"I shall go home and ask Molly herself what's the meaning of it all; that's all I shall do. It's too ridiculous—knowing Molly as I do, it's perfectly ridiculous." He got up and walked about the room with hasty

steps, laughing short unnatural laughs from time to time. "Really what will they say next? 'Satan finds some mischief still for idle tongues to do.'"

"Don't talk of Satan, please, in this house. No one knows what may happen, if he's lightly spoken about," pleaded Miss Browning.

He went on, without noticing her, talking to himself,—“I've a great mind to leave the place;—and what food for scandal that piece of folly would give rise to!” Then he was silent for a time; his hands in his pockets, his eyes on the ground, as he continued his quarter-deck march. Suddenly he stopped close to Miss Browning's chair. “I'm thoroughly ungrateful to you, for as true a mark of friendship as you've ever shown to me. True or false, it was right I should know the wretched scandal that was being circulated; and it could not have been pleasant for you to tell it me. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.”

“Indeed, Mr. Gibson, if it was false I would never have named it, but let it die away.”

“It's not true though!” said he, doggedly, letting drop the hand he had taken in his effusion of gratitude.

She shook her head. “I shall always love Molly for her mother's sake,” she said. And it was a great concession from the correct Miss Browning. But her father did not understand it as such.

“You ought to love her for her own. She has done nothing to disgrace herself. I shall go straight home, and probe into the truth.”

“As if the poor girl who has been led away into deceit already would scruple much at going on in falsehood,” was Miss Browning's remark on this last speech of Mr. Gibson's; but she had discretion enough not to make it until he was well out of hearing.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

AN INNOCENT CULPRIT.

WITH his head bent down—as if he were facing some keen-blowing wind—and yet there was not a breath of air stirring—Mr. Gibson went swiftly to his own home. He rang at the door-bell; an unusual proceeding on his part. Maria opened the door. “Go and tell Miss Molly she is wanted in the dining-room. Don't say who it is that wants her.” There was something in Mr. Gibson's manner that made Maria obey him to the letter, in spite of Molly's surprised question.

“Wants me? Who is it, Maria?”

Mr. Gibson went into the dining-room, and shut the door, for an instant's solitude. He went up to the chimney-piece, took hold of it, and laid his head on his hands, and tried to still the beating of his heart.

The door opened. He knew that Molly stood there before he heard her tone of astonishment.

“Papa!”

"Hush!" said he, turning round sharply. "Shut the door. Come here."

She came to him, wondering what was amiss. Her thoughts went to the Hamleys immediately. "Is it Osborne?" she asked, breathless. If Mr. Gibson had not been too much agitated to judge calmly, he might have deduced comfort from these three words.

But instead of allowing himself to seek for comfort from collateral evidence, he said,—“Molly, what is this I hear? That you have been keeping up a clandestine intercourse with Mr. Preston—meeting him in out-of-the-way places; exchanging letters with him in a stealthy way.”

Though he had professed to disbelieve all this, and did disbelieve it at the bottom of his soul, his voice was hard and stern, his face was white and grim, and his eyes fixed Molly's with the terrible keenness of their research. Molly trembled all over; but she did not attempt to evade his penetration. If she was silent for a moment, it was because she was rapidly reviewing her relation with regard to Cynthia in the matter. It was but a moment's pause of silence; but it seemed long minutes to one who was craving for a burst of indignant denial. He had taken hold of her two arms just above her wrists, as she had just advanced towards him; he was unconscious of this action; but, as his impatience for her words grew upon him, he grasped her more and more tightly in his vice-like hands, till she made a little involuntary sound of pain. And then he let go; and she looked at her soft bruised flesh, with tears gathering fast to her eyes to think that he, her father, should have hurt her so. At the instant it appeared to her stranger that he should inflict bodily pain upon his child, than that he should have heard the truth—even in an exaggerated form. With a childish gesture she held out her arm to him; but if she expected pity, she received none.

"Pooh!" said he, as he just glanced at the mark, "that is nothing—nothing. Answer my question. Have you—have you met that man in private?"

"Yes, papa, I have; but I don't think it was wrong."

He sat down now. "Wrong!" he echoed, bitterly. "Not wrong? Well! I must bear it somehow. Your mother is dead. That's one comfort. It is true, then, is it? Why, I did not believe it—not I. I laughed in my sleeve at their credulity; and I was the dupe all the time!"

"Papa, I cannot tell you all. It is not my secret, or you should know it directly. Indeed, you will be sorry some time—I have never deceived you yet, have I?" trying to take one of his hands; but he kept them tightly in his pockets, his eyes fixed on the pattern of the carpet before him. "Papa!" said she, pleading again, "have I ever deceived you?"

"How can I tell? I hear of this from the town's talk. I don't know what next may come out!"

"The town's talk," said Molly in dismay. "What business is it of theirs?"

"Every one makes it their business to cast dirt on a girl's name who has disregarded the commonest rules of modesty and propriety."

"Papa, you are very hard. 'Modesty disregarded.' I will tell you exactly what I have done. I met Mr. Preston once,—that evening when you put me down to walk over Croston Heath,—and there was another person with him. I met him a second time—and that time by appointment—nobody but our two selves,—in the Towers' Park. That is all, papa. You must trust me. I cannot explain more. You must trust me indeed."

He could not help relenting at her words; there was such truth in the tone in which they were spoken. But he neither spoke nor stirred for a minute or two. Then he raised his eyes to hers for the first time since she had acknowledged the external truth of what he charged her with. Her face was very white, but it bore the impress of the final sincerity of death, when the true expression prevails without the poor disguises of time.

"The letters?" he said,—but almost as if he were ashamed to question that countenance any further.

"I gave him one letter,—of which I did not write a word,—which, in fact, I believe to have been merely an envelope, without any writing whatever inside. The giving that letter,—the two interviews I have named,—make all the private intercourse I have had with Mr. Preston. Oh! papa, what have they been saying that has grieved—shocked you so much?"

"Never mind. As the world goes, what you say you have done, Molly, is ground enough. You must tell me all. I must be able to refute these rumours point by point."

"How are they to be refuted; when you say that the truth which I have acknowledged is ground enough for what people are saying?"

"You say you were not acting for yourself, but for another. If you tell me who the other was,—if you tell me everything out fully, I will do my utmost to screen her—for of course I guess it was Cynthia—while I am exonerating you."

"No, papa!" said Molly, after some little consideration; "I have told you all I can tell; all that concerns myself; and I have promised not to say one word more."

"Then your character will be impugned. It must be, unless the fullest explanation of these secret meetings are given. I have a great mind to force the whole truth out of Preston himself!"

"Papa! once again I beg you to trust me. If you ask Mr. Preston you will very likely hear the whole truth; but that is just what I have been trying so hard to conceal, for it will only make several people very unhappy if it is known, and the whole affair is over and done with now."

"Not your share in it. Miss Browning sent for me this evening to tell me how people were talking about you. She implied that it was a complete loss of your good name. You do not know, Molly, how slight a thing may blacken a girl's reputation for life. I had hard work to stand

all she said, even though I did not believe a word of it at the time. And now you have told me that much of it is true."

"But I think you are a brave man, papa. And you believe me, don't you? We shall outlive those rumours, never fear."

"You don't know the power of ill-natured tongues, child," said he.

"Oh, now you've called me 'child' again I don't care for anything. Dear, dear papa, I'm sure it is best and wisest to take no notice of these speeches. After all they may not mean them ill-naturedly. I am sure Miss Browning would not. By-and-by they'll quite forget how much they made out of so little,—and even if they don't, you would not have me break my solemn word, would you?"

"Perhaps not. But I cannot easily forgive the person who, by practising on your generosity, led you into this scrape. You are very young, and look upon these things as merely temporary evils. I have more experience."

"Still I don't see what I can do now, papa. Perhaps I've been foolish; but what I did, I did of my ownself. It was not suggested to me. And I'm sure it was not wrong in morals, whatever it might be in judgment. As I said, it is all over now; what I did ended the affair, I am thankful to say; and it was with that object I did it. If people choose to talk about me, I must submit; and so must you, dear papa."

"Does your mother—does Mrs. Gibson—know anything about it?" asked he with sudden anxiety.

"No; not a bit; not a word. Pray don't name it to her. That might lead to more mischief than anything else. I have really told you everything I am at liberty to tell."

It was a great relief to Mr. Gibson to find that his sudden fear that his wife might have been privy to it all was ill-founded; he had been seized by a sudden dread that she, whom he had chosen to marry in order to have a protectress and guide for his daughter, had been cognizant of this ill-advised adventure with Mr. Preston; nay, more, that she might even have instigated it to save her own child; for that Cynthia was somehow or other at the bottom of it all he had no doubt whatever. But now, at any rate, Mrs. Gibson had not been playing a treacherous part; that was all the comfort he could extract out of Molly's mysterious admission, that much mischief might result from Mrs. Gibson's knowing anything about these meetings with Mr. Preston.

"Then, what is to be done?" said he. "These reports are abroad,—am I to do nothing to contradict them? Am I to go about smiling and content with all this talk about you, passing from one idle gossip to another?"

"I'm afraid so. I'm very sorry, for I never meant you to have known anything about it, and I can see now how it must distress you. But surely when nothing more happens, and nothing comes of what has happened, the wonder and the gossip must die away; I know you believe every word I have said, and that you trust me, papa? Please, for my sake, be patient with all this gossip and cackle."

"It will try me hard, Molly," said he.

"For my sake, papa!"

"I don't see what else I can do," replied he moodily, "unless I get hold of Preston."

"That would be the worst of all. That would make a talk. And, after all, perhaps he was not so very much to blame. Yes! he was. But he behaved well to me as far as that goes," said she, suddenly recollecting his speech when Mr. Sheepshanks came up in the Towers' Park—"Don't stir, you have done nothing to be ashamed of."

"That is true. A quarrel between men which drags a woman's name into notice is to be avoided at any cost. But sooner or later I must have it out with Preston. He shall find it not so pleasant to have placed my daughter in equivocal circumstances."

"He did not place me. He did not know I was coming, did not expect to meet me either time; and would far rather not have taken the letter I gave him if he could have helped himself."

"It is all a mystery. I hate to have you mixed up in mysteries."

"I hate to be mixed up. But what can I do? I know of another mystery which I am pledged not to speak about. I cannot help myself."

"Well, all I can say is, never be the heroine of a mystery that you can avoid, if you can't help being an accessory. Then, I suppose, I must yield to your wishes and let this scandal wear itself out without any notice from me?"

"What else can you do under the circumstances?"

"Ay; what else indeed? How shall you bear it?"

For an instant the quick hot tears sprang into her eyes; to have everybody—all her world thinking evil of her, did seem hard to the girl who had never thought or said any unkind thing of them. But she smiled as she made answer—

"It's like tooth-drawing, it will be over some time. It would be much worse if I had really been doing wrong."

"Cynthia shall beware—" he began; but Molly put her hand before his mouth.

"Papa, Cynthia must not be accused, or suspected; you will drive her out of your house if you do, she is so proud, and so unprotected, except by you. And Roger,—for Roger's sake, you will never do or say anything to send Cynthia away, when he has trusted us all to take care of her, and love her in his absence. Oh! I think if she were really wicked, and I did not love her at all, I should feel bound to watch over her, he loves her so dearly. And she is really good at heart, and I do love her dearly. You must not vex or hurt Cynthia, papa,—remember she is dependent upon you!"

"I think the world would get on tolerably well, if there were no women in it. They plague the life out of one. You've made me forget, amongst you—poor old Job Haughton that I ought to have gone to see an hour ago."

Molly put up her mouth to be kissed. "You're not angry with me now, papa, are you?"

"Get out of my way" (kissing her all the same). "If I'm not angry with you, I ought to be; for you've caused a great deal of worry, which won't be over yet awhile, I can tell you."

For all Molly's bravery at the time of this conversation, it was she that suffered more than her father. He kept out of the way of hearing gossip; but she was perpetually thrown into the small society of the place. Mrs. Gibson herself had caught cold, and moreover was not tempted by the quiet old-fashioned visiting which was going on just about this time, provoked by the visit of two of Mrs. Dawes' pretty unrefined nieces, who laughed, and chattered, and ate, and would fain have flirted with Mr. Ashton, the vicar, could he have been brought by any possibility to understand his share in the business. Mr. Preston did not accept the invitations to Hollingford tea-drinkings with the same eager gratitude as he had done a year before: or else the shadow which hung over Molly would not have extended to him, her co-partner in the clandestine meetings which gave such umbrage to the feminine virtue of the town. Molly herself was invited, because it would not do to pass any apparent slight on either Mr. or Mrs. Gibson; but there was a tacit and under-hand protest against her being received on the old terms. Every one was civil to her, but no one was cordial; there was a very perceptible film of difference in their behaviour to her from what it was formerly; nothing that had outlines and could be defined. But Molly, for all her clear conscience and her brave heart, felt acutely that she was only tolerated, not welcomed. She caught the buzzing whispers of the two Miss Oakes's, who, when they first met the heroine of the prevailing scandal, looked at her askance, and criticized her pretensions to good looks, with hardly an attempt at under-tones. Molly tried to be thankful that her father was not in the mood for visiting. She was even glad that her stepmother was too much of an invalid to come out, when she felt thus slighted, and as it were, degraded from her place. Miss Browning herself, that true old friend, spoke to her with chilling dignity, and much reserve; for she had never heard a word from Mr. Gibson since the evening when she had put herself to so much pain to tell him of the disagreeable rumours affecting his daughter.

Only Miss Phœbe would seek out Molly with even more than her former tenderness; and this tried Molly's calmness more than all the slights put together. The soft hand, pressing hers under the table,—the continual appeals to her, so as to bring her back into the conversation, touched Molly almost to shedding tears. Sometimes the poor girl wondered to herself whether this change in the behaviour of her acquaintances was not a mere fancy of hers; whether, if she had never had that conversation with her father, in which she had borne herself so bravely at the time, she should have discovered the difference in their treatment of her. She never told her father how she felt these perpetual small slights; she had chosen to bear the burden of her own free will; nay,

more, she had insisted on being allowed to do so; and it was not for her to grieve him now by showing that she shrank from the consequences of her own act. So she never even made an excuse for not going into the small gaieties, or mingling with the society of Hollingford. Only she suddenly let go the stretch of restraint she was living in, when one evening her father told her that he was really anxious about Mrs. Gibson's cough, and should like Molly to give up a party at Mrs. Goodenough's, to which they were all three invited, but to which Molly alone was going. Molly's heart leaped up at the thoughts of stopping at home, even though the next moment she had to blame herself for rejoicing at a reprieve that was purchased by another's suffering. However, the remedies prescribed by her husband did Mrs. Gibson good; and she was particularly grateful and caressing to Molly.

"Really, dear!" said she, stroking Molly's head, "I think your hair is getting softer, and losing that disagreeable crisp curly feeling."

Then Molly knew that her stepmother was in high good-humour; the smoothness or curliness of her hair was a sure test of the favour in which Mrs. Gibson held her at the moment.

"I am so sorry to be the cause of detaining you from this little party, but dear papa is so over-anxious about me. I have always been a kind of pet with gentlemen, and poor Mr. Kirkpatrick never knew how to make enough of me. But I think Mr. Gibson is even more foolishly fond; his last words were, 'Take care of yourself, Hyacinth;' and then he came back again to say, 'If you don't attend to my directions I won't answer for the consequences.' I shook my forefinger at him, and said, 'Don't be so anxious, you silly man.'"

"I hope we have done everything he told us to do," said Molly.

"Oh yes! I feel so much better. Do you know, late as it is, I think you might go to Mrs. Goodenough's yet? Maria could take you, and I should like to see you dressed; when one has been wearing dull warm gowns for a week or two one gets quite a craving for bright colours, and evening dress. So go and get ready, dear, and then perhaps you'll bring me back some news, for really shut up as I have been with only papa and you for the last fortnight, I've got quite moped and dismal, and I can't bear to keep young people from the gaieties suitable to their age."

"Oh, pray, mamma! I had so much rather not go?"

"Very well! very well! Only I think it is rather selfish of you, when you see I am so willing to make the sacrifice for your sake."

"But you say it is a sacrifice to you, and I don't want to go."

"Very well; did I not say you might stop at home; only pray don't chop logic; nothing is so fatiguing to a sick person."

Then they were silent for some time. Mrs. Gibson broke the silence by saying, in a languid voice—

"Can't you think of anything amusing to say, Molly?"

Molly pumped up from the depths of her mind a few little trivialities which she had nearly forgotten, but she felt that they were anything but

amusing, and so Mrs. Gibson seemed to feel them; for presently she said—

“I wish Cynthia was at home.” And Molly felt it as a reproach to her own dulness.

“Shall I write to her and ask her to come back?”

“Well, I’m not sure; I wish I knew a great many things. You’ve not heard anything of poor dear Osborne Hamley lately, have you?”

Remembering her father’s charge not to speak of Osborne’s health, Molly made no reply, nor was any needed, for Mrs. Gibson went on thinking aloud—

“You see, if Mr. Henderson has been as attentive as he was in the spring—and the chances about Roger—I shall be really grieved if anything happens to that young man, uncouth as he is, but it must be owned that Africa is not merely an unhealthy—it is a savage—and even in some parts a cannibal country. I often think of all I’ve read of it in geography books, as I lie awake at night, and if Mr. Henderson is really becoming attached! The future is hidden from us by infinite wisdom, Molly, or else I should like to know it; one would calculate one’s behaviour at the present time so much better if one only knew what events were to come. But I think, on the whole, we had better not alarm Cynthia. If we had only known in time we might have planned for her to have come down with Lord Cumnor and my lady.”

“Are they coming? Is Lady Cumnor well enough to travel?”

“Yes, to be sure. Or else I should not have considered whether or no Cynthia could have come down with them; it would have sounded very well—more than respectable, and would have given her a position among that lawyer set in London.”

“Then Lady Cumnor is better?”

“To be sure. I should have thought papa would have mentioned it to you; but, to be sure, he is always so scrupulously careful not to speak about his patients. Quite right too—quite right and delicate. Why, he hardly ever tells me how they are going on. Yes! The Earl and the Countess, and Lady Harriet, and Lord and Lady Cuxhaven, and Lady Agnes; and I’ve ordered a new winter bonnet and a black satin cloak.”

CHAPTER XLIX.

MOLLY GIBSON FINDS A CHAMPION.

LADY CUMNOR had so far recovered from the violence of her attack, and from the consequent operation, as to be able to be removed to the Towers for change of air; and accordingly she was brought thither by her whole family with all the pomp and state becoming an invalid peeress. There was every probability that “the family” would make a longer residence at the Towers than they had done for several years, during

which time they had been wanderers hither and thither in search of health. Somehow, after all, it was very pleasant and restful to come to the old ancestral home, and every member of the family enjoyed it in his or her own way; Lord Cumnor most especially. His talent for gossip and his love of small details had scarcely fair play in the hurry of a London life, and were much nipped in the bud during his Continental sojournings, as he neither spoke French fluently, nor understood it easily when spoken. Besides, he was a great proprietor, and liked to know how his land was going on; how his tenants were faring in the world. He liked to hear of their births, marriages, and deaths, and had something of a royal memory for faces. In short, if ever a peer was an old woman, Lord Cumnor was that peer; but he was a very good-natured old woman, and rode about on his stout old cob with his pockets full of halfpence for the children, and little packets of snuff for the old people. Like an old woman, too, he enjoyed an afternoon cup of tea in his wife's sitting-room, and over his gossip's beverage he would repeat all that he had learnt in the day. Lady Cumnor was exactly in that state of convalescence when such talk as her lord's was extremely agreeable to her, but she had contemned the habit of listening to gossip so severely all her life, that she thought it due to consistency to listen first, and enter a supercilious protest afterwards. It had, however, come to be a family habit for all of them to gather together in Lady Cumnor's room on their return from their daily walks or drives or rides, and over the fire, sipping their tea at her early meal, to recount the morsels of local intelligence they had heard during the morning. When they had said all that they had to say (and not before), they had always to listen to a short homily from her ladyship on the well-worn texts,—the poorness of conversation about persons,—the probable falsehood of all they had heard, and the degradation of character implied by its repetition. On one of these November evenings they were all assembled in Lady Cumnor's room. She was lying,—all draped in white, and covered up with an Indian shawl,—on a sofa near the fire. Lady Harriet sat on the rug, close before the wood-fire, picking up fallen embers with a pair of dwarf tongs, and piling them on the red and odorous heap in the centre of the hearth. Lady Cuxhaven, notable from girlhood, was using the blind-man's holiday to net fruit-nets for the walls at Cuxhaven Park. Lady Cumnor's woman was trying to see to pour out tea by the light of one small wax-candle in the background (for Lady Cumnor could not bear much light to her weakened eyes); and the great leafless branches of the trees outside the house kept sweeping against the windows, moved by the wind that was gathering.

It was always Lady Cumnor's habit to snub those she loved best. Her husband was perpetually snubbed by her, yet she missed him now that he was later than usual, and professed not to want her tea; but they all knew that it was only because he was not there to hand it to her, and be found fault with for his invariable stupidity in forgetting that she liked to put sugar in before she took any cream. At length he burst in :—

"I beg your pardon, my lady,—I'm later than I should have been, I know. Why, haven't you had your tea yet?" he exclaimed, bustling about to get the cup for his wife.

"You know I never take cream before I've sweetened it," said she, with even more emphasis on the "never" than usual.

"To be sure! What a simpleton I am! I think I might have remembered it by this time. You see I met old Sheepshanks, and that's the reason of it."

"Of your handing me the cream before the sugar?" asked his wife. It was one of her grim jokes.

"No, no! ha, ha! You're better this evening, I think, my dear. But, as I was saying, Sheepshanks is such an eternal talker, there's no getting away from him, and I had no idea it was so late!"

"Well, I think the least you can do is to tell us something of Mr. Sheepshanks' conversation now you have torn yourself away from him."

"Conversation! did I call it conversation? I don't think I said much. I listened. He really has always a great deal to say. More than Preston, for instance. And, by the way, he was telling me something about Preston;—old Sheepshanks thinks he'll be married before long,—he says there's a great deal of gossip going on about him and Gibson's daughter. They've been caught meeting in the park, and corresponding, and all that kind of thing that is likely to end in a marriage."

"I shall be very sorry," said Lady Harriet. "I always liked that girl; and I can't bear papa's model land-agent."

"I daresay it's not true," said Lady Cumnor, in a very audible aside to Lady Harriet. "Papa picks up stories one day to contradict them the next."

"Ah, but this did sound like truth. Sheepshanks said all the old ladies in the town had got hold of it, and were making a great scandal out of it."

"I don't think it does sound quite a nice story. I wonder what Clare could be doing to allow such goings on," said Lady Cuxhaven.

"I think it is much more likely that Clare's own daughter—that pretty pawky Miss Kirkpatrick—is the real heroine of this story," said Lady Harriet. "She always looks like a heroine of genteel comedy; and those young ladies were capable of a good deal of innocent intriguing, if I remember rightly. Now little Molly Gibson has a certain *gaucherie* about her which would disqualify her at once from any clandestine proceedings. Besides, 'clandestine!' why, the child is truth itself. Papa, are you sure Mr. Sheepshanks said it was Miss Gibson that was exciting Hollingford scandal? Wasn't it Miss Kirkpatrick? The notion of her and Mr. Preston making a match of it does not sound so incongruous; but, if it's my little friend Molly, I'll go to church and forbid the banns."

"Really, Harriet, I can't think what always makes you take such an interest in all these petty Hollingford affairs."

"Mamma, it's only tit for tat. They take the most lively interest in

all our sayings and doings. If I were going to be married, they would want to know every possible particular,—when we first met, what we first said to each other, what I wore, and whether he offered by letter or in person. I'm sure those good Miss Brownings were wonderfully well-informed as to Mary's methods of managing her nursery, and educating her girls; so it's only a proper return of the compliment to want to know on our side how they are going on. I am quite of papa's faction. I like to hear all the local gossip."

"Especially when it is flavoured with a spice of scandal and impropriety, as in this case," said Lady Cumnor, with the momentary bitterness of a convalescent invalid. Lady Harriet coloured with annoyance. But then she rallied her courage, and said with more gravity than before,—

"I am really interested in this story about Molly Gibson, I own. I both like and respect her; and I do not like to hear her name coupled with that of Mr. Preston. I can't help fancying papa has made some mistake."

"No, my dear. I'm sure I'm repeating what I heard. I'm sorry I said anything about it, if it annoys you or my lady there. Sheepshanks did say Miss Gibson, though, and he went on to say it was a pity the girl had got herself so talked about; for it was the way they had carried on that gave rise to all the chatter. Preston himself was a very fair match for her, and nobody could have objected to it. But I'll try and find a more agreeable piece of news. Old Margery at the lodge is dead; and they don't know where to find some one to teach clear-starching at your school; and Robert Hall made forty pounds last year by his apples." So they drifted away from Molly and her affairs; only Lady Harriet kept turning what she had heard over in her own mind with interest and wonder.

"I warned her against him the day of her father's wedding. And what a straightforward, out-spoken topic it was then! I don't believe it; it's only one of old Sheepshanks' stories, half invention and half deafness."

The next day Lady Harriet rode over to Hollingsford, and for the settling of her curiosity she called on Miss Brownings, and introduced the subject. She would not have spoken about the rumour she had heard to any who were not warm friends of Molly's. If Mr. Sheepshanks had chosen to allude to it when she had been riding with her father, she could very soon have silenced him by one of the haughty looks she knew full well how to assume. But she felt as if she must know the truth, and accordingly she began thus abruptly to Miss Browning.

"What is all this I hear about my little friend Molly Gibson and Mr. Preston?"

"Oh, Lady Harriet! have you heard of it? We are so sorry!"

"Sorry for what?"

"I think, begging your ladyship's pardon, we had better not say any more till we know how much you know," said Miss Browning.

"Nay," replied Lady Harriet, laughing a little, "I shan't tell what I know till I am sure you know more. Then we'll make an exchange if you like."

"I'm afraid it's no laughing matter for poor Molly," said Miss Browning, shaking her head. "People do say such things!"

"But I don't believe them; indeed I don't," burst in Miss Phœbe, half crying.

"No more will I, then," said Lady Harriet, taking the good lady's hand.

"It's all very fine, Phœbe, saying you don't believe them, but I should like to know who it was that convinced me, sadly against my will, I am sure."

"I only told you the facts as Mrs. Goodenough told them me, sister; but I'm sure if you had seen poor patient Molly as I have done, sitting up in a corner of a room, looking at the *Beauties of England and Wales* till she must have been sick of them, and no one speaking to her; and she as gentle and sweet as ever at the end of the evening, though maybe a bit pale—facts or no facts, I won't believe anything against her."

So there sate Miss Phœbe, in tearful defiance of facts.

"And, as I said before, I'm quite of your opinion," said Lady Harriet.

"But how does your ladyship explain away her meetings with Mr. Preston in all sorts of unlikely and open-air places?" asked Miss Browning, who, to do her justice, would have been only too glad to join Molly's partisans, if she could have preserved her character for logical deduction at the same time. "I went so far as to send for her father and tell him all about it. I thought at least he would have horsewhipped Mr. Preston; but he seems to have taken no notice of it."

"Then we may be quite sure he knows some way of explaining matters that we don't," said Lady Harriet, decisively. "After all, there may be a hundred and fifty perfectly natural and justifiable explanations."

"Mr. Gibson knew of none when I thought it my duty to speak to him," said Miss Browning.

"Why, suppose that Mr. Preston is engaged to Miss Kirkpatrick, and Molly is confidante and messenger."

"I don't see that your ladyship's supposition much alters the blame. Why, if he is honourably engaged to Cynthia Kirkpatrick, does he not visit her openly at her home in Mr. Gibson's house? Why does Molly lend herself to clandestine proceedings?"

"One can't account for everything," said Lady Harriet, a little impatiently, for reason was going hard against her. "But I choose to have faith in Molly Gibson. I'm sure she's not done anything very wrong. I've a great mind to go and call on her—Mrs. Gibson is confined to her room with this horrid influenza—and take her with me on a round of calls through this little gossiping town,—on Mrs. Goodenough, or Badenough, who seems to have been propagating all these stories. But I've not time to-day. I've to meet papa at three, and it's three now. Only remember,

Miss Phœbe, it's you and I against the world, in defence of a distressed damsel."

"Don Quixote and Sancho Panza?" said she to herself as she ran lightly down Miss Browning's old-fashioned staircase.

"Now, I don't think that's pretty of you, Phœbe," said Miss Browning in some displeasure, as soon as she was alone with her sister. "First, you convince me against my will, and make me very unhappy; and I have to do unpleasant things, all because you've made me believe that certain statements are true; and then you turn round and cry, and say you don't believe a word of it all, making me out a regular ogre and backbiter. No! it's of no use. I shan't listen to you." So she left Miss Phœbe in tears, and locked herself up in her own room.

Lady Harriet, meanwhile, was riding homewards by her father's side, apparently listening to all he chose to say, but in reality turning over the probabilities and possibilities that might account for these strange interviews between Molly and Mr. Preston. It was a case of *parler de l'âne et l'on en voit les oreilles*. At a turn in the road they saw Mr. Preston a little way before them, coming towards them on his good horse, *point device*, in his riding attire.

The earl, in his thread-bare coat, and on his old brown cob, called out cheerfully,—

"Aha! here's Preston. Good-day to you. I was just wanting to ask you about that slip of pasture-land on the Home Farm. John Brickhill wants to plough it up and crop it. It's not two acres at the best."

While they were talking over this bit of land, Lady Harriet came to her resolution. As soon as her father had finished, she said,—

"Mr. Preston, perhaps you will allow me to ask you one or two questions to relieve my mind, for I am in some little perplexity at present."

"Certainly; I shall only be too happy to give you any information in my power." But the moment after he had made this polite speech, he recollected Molly's speech—that she would refer her case to Lady Harriet. But the letters had been returned, and the affair was now wound up. She had come off conqueror, he the vanquished. Surely she would never have been so ungenerous as to appeal after that.

"There are reports about Miss Gibson and you current among the gossips of Hollingford. Are we to congratulate you on your engagement to that young lady?"

"Ah! by the way, Preston, we ought to have done it before," interrupted Lord Cumnor, in hasty goodwill. But his daughter said quietly, "Mr. Preston has not yet told us if the reports are well founded, papa."

She looked at him with the air of a person expecting an answer, and expecting a truthful answer.

"I am not so fortunate," replied he, trying to make his horse appear fidgety, without incurring observation.

"Then I may contradict that report?" asked Lady Harriet quickly. "Or is there any reason for believing that in time it may come true? I ask because such reports, if unfounded, do harm to young ladies."

"Keep other sweethearts off," put in Lord Cumnor, looking a good deal pleased at his own discernment. Lady Harriet went on:—

"And I take a great interest in Miss Gibson."

Mr. Preston saw from her manner that he was "in for it," as he expressed it to himself. The question was, how much or how little did she know?

"I have no expectation or hope of ever having a nearer interest in Miss Gibson than I have at present. I shall be glad if this straightforward answer relieves your ladyship from your perplexity."

He could not help the touch of insolence that accompanied these last words. It was not in the words themselves, nor in the tone in which they were spoken, nor in the look which accompanied them, it was in all; it implied a doubt of Lady Harriet's right to question him as she did; and there was something of defiance in it as well. But this touch of insolence put Lady Harriet's mettle up; and she was not one to check herself, in any course, for the opinion of an inferior.

"Then, sir! are you aware of the injury you may do to a young lady's reputation if you meet her, and detain her in long conversations, when she is walking by herself, unaccompanied by any one? You give rise—you have given rise to reports."

"My dear Harriet, are not you going too far? You don't know—Mr. Preston may have intentions—acknowledged intentions."

"No, my lord. I have no intentions with regard to Miss Gibson. She may be a very worthy young lady—I have no doubt she is. Lady Harriet seems determined to push me into such a position that I cannot but acknowledge myself to be—it is not enviable—not pleasant to own—but I am, in fact, a jilted man; jilted by Miss Kirkpatrick, after a tolerably long engagement. My interviews with Miss Gibson were not of the most agreeable kind—as you may conclude when I tell you she was, I believe, the instigator—certainly, she was the agent in this last step of Miss Kirkpatrick's. Is your ladyship's curiosity" (with an emphasis on this last word) "satisfied with this rather mortifying confession of mine?"

"Harriet, my dear, you've gone too far—we had no right to pry into Mr. Preston's private affairs."

"No more I had," said Lady Harriet, with a smile of winning frankness: the first smile she had accorded to Mr. Preston for many a long day; ever since the time, years ago, when, presuming on his handsomeness, he had assumed a tone of gallant familiarity with Lady Harriet, and paid her personal compliments as he would have done to an equal.

"But he will excuse me, I hope," continued she, still in that gracious manner which made him feel that he now held a much higher place in her esteem than he had had at the beginning of their interview, "when he learns that the busy tongues of the Hollingford ladies have been speaking

of my friend, Miss Gibson, in the most unwarrantable manner; drawing unjustifiable inferences from the facts of that intercourse with Mr. Preston, the nature of which he has just conferred such a real obligation on me by explaining."

"I think I need hardly request Lady Harriet to consider this explanation of mine as confidential," said Mr. Preston.

"Of course, of course!" said the earl; "every one will understand that." And he rode home, and told his wife and Lady Cuxhaven the whole conversation between Lady Harriet and Mr. Preston; in the strictest confidence, of course. Lady Harriet had to stand a good many strictures on manners, and proper dignity for a few days after this. However, she consoled herself by calling on the Gibsons; and, finding that Mrs. Gibson (who was still an invalid) was asleep at the time, she experienced no difficulty in carrying off the unconscious Molly for a walk, which Lady Harriet so contrived that they twice passed through all the length of the principal street of the town, loitered at Grinstead's for half an hour, and wound up by Lady Harriet's calling on the Miss Brownings, who, to her regret, were not at home.

"Perhaps, it is as well," said she, after a minute's consideration. "I'll leave my card, and put your name down underneath it, Molly."

Molly was a little puzzled by the manner in which she had been taken possession of, like an inanimate chattel, for all the afternoon, and exclaimed,—

"Please, Lady Harriet—I never leave cards; I have not got any, and on the Miss Brownings, of all people; why, I am in and out whenever I like."

"Never mind, little one. To-day you shall do everything properly, and according to full etiquette."

"And now tell Mrs. Gibson to come out to the Towers for a long day; we will send the carriage for her whenever she will let us know that she is strong enough to come. Indeed, she had better come for a few days; at this time of the year it does not do for an invalid to be out in the evenings, even in a carriage." So spoke Lady Harriet, standing on the white door-steps at Miss Brownings', and holding Molly's hand while she wished her good-by. "You'll tell her, dear, that I came partly to see her—but that finding her asleep, I ran off with you, and don't forget about her coming to stay with us for change of air—mamma will like it, I'm sure—and the carriage, and all that. And now good-by, we've done a good day's work! And better than you're aware of," continued she, still addressing Molly, though the latter was quite out of hearing.

"Hollingford is not the place I take it to be, if it doesn't veer round in Miss Gibson's favour after my to-day's trotting of that child about."

CHAPTER L.

CYNTHIA AT BAY.

Mrs. Gibson was slow in recovering her strength after the influenza, and before she was well enough to accept Lady Harriet's invitation to the Towers, Cynthia came home from London. If Molly had thought her manner of departure was scarcely as affectionate and considerate as it might have been,—if such a thought had crossed Molly's fancy for an instant, she was repentant for it as soon as ever Cynthia returned, and the girls met together face to face, with all the old familiar affection, going upstairs to the drawing-room, with their arms round each other's waists, and sitting there together hand in hand. Cynthia's whole manner was more quiet than it had been, when the weight of her unpleasant secret rested on her mind, and made her alternately despondent or flighty.

"After all," said Cynthia, "there's a look of home about these rooms which is very pleasant. But I wish I could see you looking stronger, mamma! that's the only unpleasant thing. Molly, why didn't you send for me?"

"I wanted to do," began Molly.

"But I wouldn't let her," said Mrs. Gibson. "You were much better in London than here, for you could have done me no good; and your letters were very agreeable to read; and now Helen is better, and I'm nearly well, and you've come home just at the right time, for everybody is full of the Charity Ball."

"But we are not going this year, mamma," said Cynthia decidedly. "It is on the 25th, isn't it? and I'm sure you'll never be well enough to take us."

"You really seem determined to make me out worse than I am, child," said Mrs. Gibson, rather querulously, she being one of those who, when their malady is only trifling, exaggerate it, but when it is really of some consequence, are unwilling to sacrifice any pleasures by acknowledging it. It was well for her in this instance that her husband had wisdom and authority enough to forbid her going to this ball, on which she had set her heart; but the consequence of his prohibition was an increase of domestic plaintiveness and low spirits, which seemed to tell on Cynthia—the bright gay Cynthia herself—and it was often hard work for Molly to keep up the spirits of two other people as well as her own. Ill-health might account for Mrs. Gibson's despondency, but why was Cynthia so silent, not to say so sighing? Molly was puzzled to account for it; and all the more perplexed because from time to time Cynthia kept calling upon her for praise for some unknown and mysterious virtue that she had practised; and Molly was young enough to believe that, after any exercise of virtue, the spirits rose, cheered up by an approving conscience. Such was not the case with Cynthia, however. She sometimes said such things as these, when she had been particularly inert and desponding:—

"Ah, Molly, you must let my goodness lie fallow for a while! It has borne such a wonderful crop this year. I have been so pretty-behaved—if you knew all!" Or, "Really, Molly, my virtue must come down from the clouds! It was strained to the utmost in London—and I find it is like a kite—after soaring aloft for some time, it suddenly comes down, and gets tangled in all sorts of briars and brambles; which things are all allegory, unless you can bring yourself to believe in my extraordinary goodness while I was away—giving me a sort of right to fall foul of all mamma's briars and brambles now."

But Molly had had some experience of Cynthia's whim of perpetually hinting at a mystery which she did not mean to reveal in the Mr. Preston days, and, although she was occasionally piqued into curiosity, Cynthia's allusions at something more in the background fell in general on rather deaf ears. One day the mystery burst its shell, and came out in the shape of an offer made to Cynthia by Mr. Henderson—and refused. Under all the circumstances, Molly could not appreciate the heroic goodness so often alluded to. The revelation of the secret at last took place in this way. Mrs. Gibson breakfasted in bed: she had done so ever since she had had the influenza; and, consequently, her own private letters always went up on her breakfast-tray. One morning she came into the drawing-room earlier than usual, with an open letter in her hand.

"I've had a letter from aunt Kirkpatrick, Cynthia. She sends me my dividends,—your uncle is so busy. But what does she mean by this, Cynthia" (holding out the letter to her, with a certain paragraph indicated by her finger). Cynthia put her netting on one side, and looked at the writing. Suddenly her face turned scarlet, and then became of a deadly white. She looked at Molly, as if to gain courage from the strong serene countenance.

"It means—mamma, I may as well tell you at once—Mr. Henderson offered to me while I was in London, and I refused him."

"Refused him—and you never told me, but let me hear it by chance! Really, Cynthia, I think you're very unkind. And pray what made you refuse Mr. Henderson? Such a fine young man,—and such a gentleman! Your uncle told me he had a very good private fortune besides."

"Mamma, do you forget that I have promised to marry Roger Hamley?" said Cynthia quietly.

"No! of course I don't—how can I, with Molly always dinning the word 'engagement' into my ears? But really, when one considers all the uncertainties,—and after all it was not a distinct promise,—he seemed almost as if he might have looked forward to something of this sort."

"Of what sort, mamma?" said Cynthia sharply.

"Why, of a more eligible offer. He must have known you might change your mind, and meet with some one you liked better: so little as you had seen of the world." Cynthia made an impatient movement, as if to stop her mother.

"I never said I liked him better,—how can you talk so, mamma?"

I'm going to marry Roger, and there's an end of it. I will not be spoken to about it again." She got up and left the room.

"Going to marry Roger! That's all very fine. But who is to guarantee his coming back alive! And if he does, what have they to marry upon, I should like to know? I don't wish her to have accepted Mr. Henderson, though I am sure she liked him; and true love ought to have its course, and not be thwarted; but she need not have quite finally refused him until—well, until we had seen how matters turn out. Such an invalid as I am too! It has given me quite a palpitation at the heart. I do call it quite unfeeling of Cynthia."

"Certainly," began Molly; but then she remembered that her step-mother was far from strong, and unable to bear a protest in favour of the right course without irritation. So she changed her speech into a suggestion of remedies for palpitation; and curbed her impatience to speak out her indignation at the contemplated falsehood to Roger. But when they were alone, and Cynthia began upon the subject, Molly was less merciful. Cynthia said,—

"Well, Molly, and now you know all! I've been longing to tell you—and yet somehow I could not."

"I suppose it was a repetition of Mr. Cox's," said Molly gravely. "You were agreeable,—and he took it for something more."

"I don't know," sighed Cynthia. "I mean I don't know if I was agreeable or not. He was very kind—very pleasant—but I did not expect it all to end as it did. However, it is of no use thinking of it."

"No!" said Molly, simply; for to her mind the pleasantest and kindest person in the world put in comparison with Roger was as nothing; he stood by himself. Cynthia's next words,—and they did not come very soon,—were on quite a different subject, and spoken in rather a pettish tone. Nor did she allude again in jesting sadness to her late efforts at virtue.

In a little while Mrs. Gibson was able to accept the often-repeated invitation from the Towers to go and stay there for a day or two. Lady Harriet told her that it would be a kindness to Lady Cumnor to come and bear her company in the life of seclusion the latter was still compelled to lead; and Mrs. Gibson was flattered and gratified with a dim unconscious sense of being really wanted, not merely deluding herself into a pleasing fiction. Lady Cumnor was in that state of convalescence common to many invalids. The spring of life had begun again to flow, and with the flow returned the old desires and projects and plans, which had all become mere matters of indifference during the worst part of her illness. But as yet her bodily strength was not sufficient to be an agent to her energetic mind, and the difficulty of driving the ill-matched pair of body and will—the one weak and languid, the other strong and stern,—made her ladyship often very irritable. Mrs. Gibson herself was not quite strong enough for a "*souffire-doulcur*;" and the visit to the Towers was not,

on the whole, quite so happy a one as she had anticipated. Lady Cuxhaven and Lady Harriet, each aware of their mother's state of health and temper, but only alluding to it as slightly as was absolutely necessary in their conversations with each other, took care not to leave "Clare" too long with Lady Cumnor; but several times when one or the other went to relieve guard they found Clare in tears, and Lady Cumnor holding forth on some point on which she had been meditating during the silent hours of her illness, and on which she seemed to consider herself born to set the world to rights. Mrs. Gibson was always apt to consider these remarks as addressed with a personal direction at some error of her own, and defended the fault in question with a sense of property in it, whatever it might happen to be. The second and the last day of her stay at the Towers, Lady Harriet came in, and found her mother haranguing in an excited tone of voice, and Clare looking submissive and miserable and oppressed.

"What's the matter, dear mamma? Are not you tiring yourself with talking?"

"No, not at all! I was only speaking of the folly of people dressing above their station. I began by telling Clare of the fashions of my grandmother's days, when every class had a sort of costume of its own,—and servants did not ape tradespeople, nor tradespeople professional men, and so on,—and what must the foolish woman do but begin to justify her own dress, as if I had been accusing her, or even thinking about her at all. Such nonsense! Really, Clare, your husband has spoilt you sadly, if you can't listen to any one without thinking they are alluding to you! People may flatter themselves just as much by thinking that their faults are always present to other people's minds, as if they believe that the world is always contemplating their individual charms and virtues."

"I was told, Lady Cumnor, that this silk was reduced in price. I bought it at Waterloo House after the season was over," said Mrs. Gibson, touching the very handsome gown she wore in deprecation of Lady Cumnor's angry voice, and blundering on to the very source of irritation.

"Again, Clare! How often must I tell you I had no thought of you or your gowns, or whether they cost much or little; your husband has to pay for them, and it is his concern if you spend more on your dress than you ought to do."

"It was only five guineas for the whole dress," pleaded Mrs. Gibson.

"And very pretty it is," said Lady Harriet, stooping to examine it, and so hoping to soothe the poor aggrieved woman. But Lady Cumnor went on.

"No! you ought to have known me better by this time. When I think a thing I say it out. I don't beat about the bush. I use straightforward language. I will tell you where I think you have been in fault, Clare, if you like to know." Like it or not, the plain-speaking was coming now. "You have spoilt that girl of yours till she does not know

her own mind. She has behaved abominably to Mr. Preston ; and it is all in consequence of the faults in her education. You have much to answer for."

"Mamma, mamma!" said Lady Harriet, "Mr. Preston did not wish it spoken about." And at the same moment Mrs. Gibson exclaimed, "Cynthia—Mr. Preston!" in such a tone of surprise, that if Lady Cumnor had been in the habit of observing the revelations made by other people's tones and voices, she would have found out that Mrs. Gibson was ignorant of the affair to which she was alluding.

"As for Mr. Preston's wishes, I do not suppose I am bound to regard them when I feel it my duty to reprove error," said Lady Cumnor loftily to Lady Harriet. "And, Clare, do you mean to say that you are not aware that your daughter has been engaged to Mr. Preston for some time—years, I believe,—and has at last chosen to break it off,—and has used the Gibson girl—I forget her name,—as a cat's-paw, and made both her and herself the town's talk—the butt for all the gossip of Hollingsford. I remember when I was young there was a girl called Jilting Jessy. You'll have to watch over your young lady, or she will get some such name. I speak to you like a friend, Clare, when I tell you it's my opinion that girl of yours will get herself into some more mischief yet before she's safely married. Not that I care one straw for Mr. Preston's feelings. I don't even know if he's got feelings or not; but I know what is becoming in a young woman, and jilting is not. And now you may both go away, and send Dawson to me, for I'm tired, and want to have a little sleep."

"Indeed, Lady Cumnor—will you believe me?—I do not think Cynthia was ever engaged to Mr. Preston. There was an old flirtation. I was afraid ——"

"Ring the bell for Dawson," said Lady Cumnor, wearily: her eyes closed. Lady Harriet had too much experience of her mother's moods not to lead Mrs. Gibson away almost by main force, she protesting all the while that she did not think there was any truth in the statement, though it was dear Lady Cumnor that said it.

Once in her own room, Lady Harriet said, "Now, Clare, I'll tell you all about it; and I think you'll have to believe it, for it was Mr. Preston himself who told me. I heard of a great commotion in Hollingsford about Mr. Preston; and I met him riding out, and asked him what it was all about; he did not want to speak about it, evidently. No man does, I suppose, when he's been jilted; and he made both papa and me promise not to tell; but papa did—and that's what mamma has for a foundation; you see, a really good one."

"But Cynthia is engaged to another man—she really is. And another—a very good match indeed—has just been offering to her in London. Mr. Preston is always at the root of mischief."

"Nay! I do think in this case it must be that pretty Miss Cynthia of yours who has drawn on one man to be engaged to her,—not to say two,—and another to make her an offer. I can't endure Mr. Preston, but I think

it's rather hard to accuse him of having called up the rivals, who are, I suppose, the occasion of his being jilted."

"I don't know; I always feel as if he owed me a grudge, and men have so many ways of being spiteful. You must acknowledge that if he had not met you I should not have had dear Lady Cumnor so angry with me."

"She only wanted to warn you about Cynthia. Mamma has always been very particular about her own daughters. She has been very severe on the least approach to flirting, and Mary will be like her!"

"But Cynthia will flirt, and I can't help it. She is not noisy, or giggling; she is always a lady—that everybody must own. But she has a way of attracting men, she must have inherited from me, I think." And here she smiled faintly, and would not have rejected a confirmatory compliment, but none came. "However, I will speak to her; I will get to the bottom of the whole affair. Pray tell Lady Cumnor that it has so fluttered me the way she spoke, about my dress and all. And it only cost five guineas after all, reduced from eight!"

"Well, never mind now. You are looking very much flushed; quite feverish! I left you too long in mamma's hot room. But do you know she is so much pleased to have you here?" And so Lady Cumnor really was, in spite of the continual lectures which she gave "Clare," and which poor Mrs. Gibson turned under as helplessly as the typical worm. Still it was something to have a countess to scold her; and that pleasure would endure when the worry was past. And then Lady Harriet petted her more than usual to make up for what she had to go through in the convalescent's room; and Lady Cuxhaven talked sense to her, with dashes of science and deep thought intermixed, which was very flattering, although generally unintelligible; and Lord Cumnor, good-natured, good-tempered, kind, and liberal, was full of gratitude to her for her kindness in coming to see Lady Cumnor, and his gratitude took the tangible shape of a haunch of venison, to say nothing of lesser game. When she looked back upon her visit as she drove home in the solitary grandeur of the Towers' carriage, there had been but one great enduring rub—Lady Cumnor's crossness—and she chose to consider Cynthia as the cause of that, instead of seeing the truth, which had been so often set before her by the members of her ladyship's family, that it took its origin in her state of health. Mrs. Gibson did not exactly mean to visit this one discomfort upon Cynthia, nor did she quite mean to upbraid her daughter for conduct as yet unexplained, and which might have some justification; but, finding her quietly sitting in the drawing-room, she sat down despondingly in her own little easy chair, and in reply to Cynthia's quick, pleasant greeting of—

"Well, mamma, how are you? We did not expect you so early! Let me take off your bonnet and shawl!" she replied dolefully,—

"It has not been such a happy visit that I should wish to prolong it." Her eyes were fixed on the carpet, and her face was as irresponsive to the welcome offered as she could make it.

"What has been the matter?" asked Cynthia, in all good faith.

"You! Cynthia—you! I little thought when you were born how I should have to bear to hear you spoken about."

Cynthia threw back her head, and angry light came into her eyes.

"What business have they with me? How came they to talk about me in any way?"

"Everybody is talking about you; it is no wonder they are. Lord Cumnor is sure to hear about everything always. You should take more care about what you do, Cynthia, if you don't like being talked about."

"It rather depends upon what people say," said Cynthia, affecting a lightness which she did not feel; for she had a prevision of what was coming.

"Well! I don't like it, at any rate. It is not pleasant to me to hear first of my daughter's misdoings from Lady Cumnor, and then to be lectured about her, and her flirting, and her jilting, as if I had had anything to do with it. I can assure you it has quite spoilt my visit. No! don't touch my shawl. When I go to my room I can take it myself."

Cynthia was brought to bay, and sate down; remaining with her mother, who kept sighing ostentatiously from time to time.

"Would you mind telling me what they said? If there are accusations abroad against me, it is as well I should know what they are. Here's Molly" (as the girl entered the room, fresh from a morning's walk). "Molly, mamma has come back from the Towers, and my lord and my lady have been doing me the honour to talk over my crimes and misdemeanors, and I am asking mamma what they have said. I don't set up for more virtue than other people, but I can't make out what an earl and a countess have to do with poor little me."

"It was not for your sake!" said Mrs. Gibson. "It was for mine. They felt for me, for it is not pleasant to have one's child's name in everybody's mouth."

"As I said before, that depends upon how it is in everybody's mouth. If I were going to marry Lord Hollingford, I make no doubt every one would be talking about me, and neither you nor I should mind it in the least."

"But this is no marriage with Lord Hollingford, so it is nonsense to talk as if it was. They say you've gone and engaged yourself to Mr. Preston, and now refuse to marry him; and they call that jilting."

"Do you wish me to marry him, mamma?" asked Cynthia, her face in a flame, her eyes cast down. Molly stood by, very hot, not fully understanding it; and only kept where she was by the hope of coming in as sweetener or peacemaker, or helper of some kind.

"No," said Mrs. Gibson, evidently discomfited by the question. "Of course I don't; you have gone and entangled yourself with Roger Hamley, a very worthy young man; but nobody knows where he is, and if he's dead or alive; and he has not a penny if he is alive."

"I beg your pardon. I know that he has some fortune from his mother ; it may not be much, but he is not penniless ; and he is sure to earn fame and great reputation, and with it money will come," said Cynthia.

"You've entangled yourself with him, and you've done something of the sort with Mr. Preston, and got yourself into such an imbroglio" (Mrs. Gibson could not have said "mess" for the world, although the word was present to her mind), "that when a really eligible person comes forward—handsome, agreeable, and quite the gentleman—and a good private fortune into the bargain, you have to refuse him. You'll end as an old maid, Cynthia, and it will break my heart."

"I daresay I shall," said Cynthia, quietly. "I sometimes think I am the kind of person of which old maids are made!" She spoke seriously, and a little sadly.

Mrs. Gibson began again. "I don't want to know your secrets as long as they are secrets ; but when all the town is talking about you, I think I ought to be told."

"But, mamma, I did not know I was such a subject of conversation ; and even now I can't make out how it has come about."

"No more can I. I only know that they say you've been engaged to Mr. Preston, and ought to have married him, and that I can't help it, if you did not choose, any more than I could have helped your refusing Mr. Henderson ; and yet I am constantly blamed for your misconduct. I think it's very hard." Mrs. Gibson began to cry. Just then her husband came in.

"You here, my dear ! Welcome back," said he, coming up to her courteously, and kissing her cheek. "Why, what's the matter ? Tears ?" and he heartily wished himself away again.

"Yes !" said she, raising herself up, and clutching after sympathy of any kind, at any price. "I'm come home again, and I'm telling Cynthia how Lady Cumnor has been so cross to me, and all through her. Did you know she had gone and engaged herself to Mr. Preston, and then broken it off ? Everybody is talking about it, and they know it up at the Towers."

For one moment his eyes met Molly's, and he comprehended it all. He made his lips up into a whistle, but no sound came. Cynthia had quite lost her defiant manner since her mother had spoken to Mr. Gibson. Molly sat down by her.

"Cynthia," said he, very seriously.

"Yes !" she answered, softly.

"Is this true ? I had heard something of it before—not much ; but there is scandal enough about to make it desirable that you should have some protector—some friend who knows the whole truth."

No answer. At last she said, "Molly knows it all."

Mrs. Gibson, too, had been awed into silence by her husband's grave manner, and she did not like to give vent to the jealous thought in her

mind that Molly had known the secret of which she was ignorant. Mr. Gibson replied to Cynthia with some sternness:

"Yes! I know that Molly knows it all, and that she has had to bear slander and ill words for your sake, Cynthia. But she refused to tell me more."

"She told you that much, did she?" said Cynthia, aggrieved.

"I could not help it," said Molly.

"She did not name your name," said Mr. Gibson. "At the time I believe she thought she had concealed it—but there was no mistaking who it was."

"Why did she speak about it at all?" said Cynthia, with some bitterness. Her tone—her question stirred up Mr. Gibson's passion.

"It was necessary for her to justify herself to me—I heard my daughter's reputation attacked for the private meetings she had given to Mr. Preston—I came to her for an explanation. There is no need to be ungenerous, Cynthia, because you have been a flirt and a jilt even to the degree of dragging Molly's name down into the same mire."

Cynthia lifted her bowed-down head, and looked at him.

"You say that of me, Mr. Gibson. Not knowing what the circumstances are, you say that!"

He had spoken too strongly: he knew it. But he could not bring himself to own it just at that moment. The thought of his sweet innocent Molly, who had borne so much patiently, prevented any retraction of his words at the time.

"Yes!" he said, "I do say it. You cannot tell what evil constructions are put upon actions ever so slightly beyond the bounds of maidenly propriety. I do say that Molly has had a great deal to bear, in consequence of this clandestine engagement of yours, Cynthia—there may be extenuating circumstances, I acknowledge—but you will need to remember them all to excuse your conduct to Roger Hamley, when he comes home. I asked you to tell me the full truth, in order that until he comes, and has a legal right to protect you, I may do so." No answer. "It certainly requires explanation," continued he. "Here are you engaged to two men at once to all appearances!" Still no answer. "To be sure, the gossips of the town have not yet picked out the fact of Roger Hamley's being your accepted lover; but scandal has been resting on Molly, and ought to have rested on you, Cynthia—for a concealed engagement to Mr. Preston—necessitating meetings in all sorts of places unknown to your friends."

"Papa," said Molly, "if you knew all you would not speak so to Cynthia. I wish she would tell you herself all that she has told me."

"I am ready to hear whatever she has to say," said he. But Cynthia said,—

"No! you have prejudged me; you have spoken to me as you had no right to speak. I refuse to give you my confidence, or accept your help.

People are very cruel to me"—her voice trembled for a moment—"I did not think you would have been. But I can bear it."

And then, in spite of Molly, who could have detained her by force, she tore herself away, and hastily left the room.

"Oh, papa!" said Molly, crying, and clinging to him, "do let me tell you all." And then she suddenly recollected the awkwardness of telling some of the details of the story before Mrs. Gibson, and stopped short.

"I think, Mr. Gibson, you have been very very unkind to my poor fatherless child," said Mrs. Gibson, emerging from behind her pocket-handkerchief. "I only wish her poor father had been alive, and all this would never have happened."

"Very probably. Still I cannot see of what either she or you have to complain. Inasmuch as we could, I and mine have sheltered her; I have loved her; I do love her almost as if she were my own child—as well as Molly, I do not pretend to do."

"That's it, Mr. Gibson! you do not treat her like your own child." But in the midst of this wrangle Molly stole out, and went in search of Cynthia. She thought she bore an olive-branch of healing in the sound of her father's just spoken words: "I do love her almost as if she were my own child." But Cynthia was locked into her room, and refused to open the door.

"Open to me, please," pleaded Molly. "I have something to say to you—I want to see you—do open!"

"No!" said Cynthia. "Not now. I am busy. Leave me alone. I don't want to hear what you have got to say. I do not want to see you. By-and-by we shall meet, and then——" Molly stood quite quietly, wondering what new words of more persuasion she could use. In a minute or two Cynthia called out, "Are you there still, Molly?" and when Molly answered "Yes," and hoped for a relenting, the same hard metallic voice, telling of resolution and repression, spoke out, "Go away. I cannot bear the feeling of your being there—waiting and listening. Go downstairs—out of the house—anywhere away. It is the most you can do for me, now."

"Acquitted on the Ground of Insanity."

(From a "Mad Doctor's" Point of View.)

WHEN men read in the newspapers that a murderer has been declared "Not guilty" on the ground of insanity, the intelligence affects them in various ways. One man thinks that a lunatic, if he be so dangerous by reason of his lunacy as to commit murder, ought straightway to be hanged, that he may murder no more. Another thinks that, lunatic or not, he knew that he was doing wrong, therefore he is liable to the punishment due to murder. Another will not believe that the man was a lunatic at all, but thinks that he has been got off by "those mad doctors." A fourth will gravely say that an asylum, and not the gallows, is the fit place for an insane man.

Public opinion has its rhythmical ebb and flow of excitement on this point, which last year was vehemently argued everywhere in connection with the trial of Townley, and the subsequent proceedings. This year, in the same town of Derby, a man just escaped being hanged in a state of acute mania, and no one took the least notice. This man, James Potter, was tried on March 9th before Justice Willes, for the murder of his wife, and sentenced to death. Ten days after he was so raving mad, that the authorities were obliged to acquaint Sir George Grey with the fact. Then was done that which should have been done before the trial. Dr. Hood, one of the Chancery visitors, and Dr. Meyer, the superintendent of the Broadmoor State Lunatic Asylum, were sent to examine him, and of course he was removed to a lunatic asylum. Before another *cause célèbre* is tried, it may be not unprofitable to consider the whole question once more, and to ascertain, if possible, whence arise the disputes, the scandal, and the violent feeling which is shown from time to time when an insane man is acquitted on the ground of insanity, or a sane man escapes justice because he is represented to be insane. When public feeling is excited, every man and woman makes up his or her mind upon the case, and is ready to do battle for it, as people always are for any opinion on a dim and mysterious matter not to be brought under the rules of plain downright demonstration. There is something incomprehensible about insanity, and folks' ideas of it partake of the nature of a faith; so when a dispute occurs, every one is perfectly certain—he knows not why—that the alleged lunatic is or is not insane, and no scientific evidence as at present given adds to or takes from this conviction. Essays and treatises, more or less to the point, are periodically produced in medical and legal works; but these are not read by the

general public. Before people can change their views of any subject, they must have a clearer insight into it. Till lately, even those who had the most experience of insanity were devoid of all method of the study of mind—sane and insane. When it is fully made known that the study of each is necessary to a just conception of the other, and that the method of such study is a natural and not a metaphysical one, then we may hope that men will form for themselves accurate judgments, and will reason upon sound principles whenever they discuss such questions. The pages of this Magazine seem no unfitting place in which to draw attention to the existing controversies, and to propose amendments, if any can be thought of. The public talks of the scandals of such cases as the Windham and Townley trials. The lawyers lay all the blame on the doctors, and the doctors retort upon the lawyers, but no change of any kind is made, and the next case may possibly be a greater scandal than any that have gone before.

Complaints are constantly made, especially by doctors, of the so-called "legal test of insanity." At a meeting of the officers of asylums held July, 1864, the following resolution was proposed, and almost without discussion agreed to:—"That so much of the legal test of the mental condition of an alleged criminal lunatic, which renders him a responsible agent because he knows the difference between right and wrong, is inconsistent with the fact well known to every member of this meeting, that the power of distinguishing between right and wrong exists frequently among those who are undoubtedly insane, and is often associated with dangerous and uncontrollable delusions."

This so-called test of insanity, which is the great source of contention at the present time, is generally said to have been laid down by the judges in their answers to the questions of the House of Lords in 1843. As these answers are constantly referred to, it will be well to look at them a little closer.

On March 5, 1843, Macnaughten was tried for the murder of Mr. Drummond, whom he had shot, mistaking him for Sir Robert Peel. The judges were the Lord Chief Justice Tindal and Justices Williams and Coleridge. Before the close the Lord Chief Justice stopped the trial and directed an acquittal on the ground of insanity. Great indignation was expressed on all sides at this result. It was said that the law was in fault which permitted it, and the House of Lords was urged to pass some Act which should better secure the punishment of such offenders. An important debate took place on March 13, in which the Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst, Lords Brougham, Cottenham, and Campbell took part. The Chancellor asserted that the law wanted no alteration and deprecated any fresh legislation on the subject. "Your lordships," said he, "might pass such a law: you have the power to do so: but when you came for the first time to put it into execution, the sense of all, the feeling of all reasonable men, would revolt against it; and your lordships would be obliged to retrace your steps and to repeal the law which you had passed

in a moment of excited feeling in consequence of recent painful impressions, but which you could not have passed under the influence of sober and steady reason." And he then went on to state what the law is, and to quote the words of Mr. Justice Le Blanc, who, in 1812, tried a man who had been found lunatic by inquisition, and who had committed murder when undoubtedly insane. Justice Le Blanc told the jury, "If you should be of opinion that when he committed the offence he was capable of distinguishing right from wrong, and was not under the influence of such a delusion as disabled him from distinguishing that he was doing a wrong act, in that case he is answerable to the justice of his country and guilty in the eye of the law." The Lord Chancellor also quoted Chief Justice Mansfield, who, upon the trial of Bellingham, laid down the law in very similar terms. "Therefore," said his lordship, "there is no need of any change. Can your lordships say that if a man when he commits a crime is under the influence of delusion and insanity so as not to know right from wrong, so as not to know what he is doing, is it possible that your lordships can by any legislative provision say that such a man shall be responsible for his act?" Lord Brougham also deprecated any interference with the existing law, but he criticized severely the expression we so often hear, viz. the "knowing right from wrong." "One judge," said he, "lays down the law that a man is responsible if he is 'capable of knowing right from wrong.' Another says, 'if he is capable of distinguishing good from evil;' another, 'capable of knowing what was proper;' another, 'what was wicked.'" Lord Brougham said, "that he was not sure that the public at large 'knew right from wrong,' though their lordships knew that 'distinguishing right from wrong' meant a knowledge that the act a person was about to commit was punishable by law." The other lords discussed the questions which might be put to medical witnesses, and also the power which a judge had of stopping a case or directing a jury to acquit. The result of the debate was that the House acted on the Lord Chancellor's advice, "to leave the general law as it stands;" but certain questions were put to the whole bench of judges as to the application of the law, and as to the way in which certain questions might be put to witnesses. The readers of this Magazine may some of them never have seen these celebrated questions and answers, so I give them here with a few remarks upon them. On June 19, 1843, the House of Lords assembled to hear them read. The bench of judges were unanimous in their opinion upon them, with the exception of Mr. Justice Maule, who said, "I feel great difficulty in answering the questions put by your lordships on this occasion. First, because they do not appear to arise out of, and are not put with reference to, a particular case or for a particular purpose, which might explain or limit the generality of their terms, so that full answers to them ought to be applicable to every possible state of facts not inconsistent with those assumed in the question. This difficulty is the greater from the practical experience both of the bar and

of the court being confined to questions arising out of the facts of particular cases. Secondly, because I have heard no argument at your lordships' bar or elsewhere on the subject of these questions : the want of which I feel the more, the greater are the number and extent of questions which might be raised in argument. And thirdly, from a fear of which I cannot divest myself, that, as these questions relate to matters of criminal law of great importance and frequent occurrence, the answers to them by the judges may embarrass the administrators of justice when they are cited in criminal trials." In this last particular the fears of Mr. Justice Maule have been only too frequently realized.

In the name of the remaining judges, Lord Chief Justice Tindal said, "Her Majesty's judges deem it at once impracticable, and at the same time dangerous to the administration of justice, if it were practicable, to attempt to make minute applications of the principles involved in the answers given by them to your lordships' questions. They have, therefore, confined their answers to the statement of that which they hold to be the law upon the abstract questions proposed."

Question 1 was, What is the law respecting alleged crimes committed by persons afflicted with insane delusions in respect of one or more particular subjects or persons : as, for instance, where at the time of the commission of the alleged crime, the accused knew that he was acting contrary to the law, but did the act complained of with a view, under the influence of insane delusions, of redressing or revenging some supposed grievance or injury, or of producing some supposed public benefit?

Answer. The opinion of the judges was, that notwithstanding the party committing a wrong act, when labouring under an idea of redressing a supposed grievance or injury, or under the impression of obtaining some public or private benefit, he was liable to punishment.

In this first question, be it remarked, that the House of Lords acts upon Lord Brougham's suggestion, and makes knowledge that the law was broken the test of responsibility. It is also noteworthy that these very delusions, notwithstanding which a person is responsible, were those Macnaughten had whose trial was stopped by the same judge who read these answers.

Question 2. What are the proper questions to be submitted to the jury when a person alleged to be afflicted with insane delusions respecting one or more particular subjects or persons, is charged with the commission of a crime—murder, *e.g.*—and insanity is set up as a defence?

Answer. The jury ought to be told that every man should be considered of sound mind, unless it was clearly proved in evidence to the contrary. That before a plea of insanity should be allowed, undoubted evidence ought to be adduced that the accused was of diseased mind, and that at the time he committed the act he was not conscious of right or wrong. This opinion related to every case in which a party was charged with an illegal act, and a plea of insanity was set up. Every person was supposed to know what the law was, and therefore nothing could justify

a wrong act, except it was clearly proved the party did not know right from wrong. If that was not satisfactorily proved, the accused was liable to punishment, and it was the duty of the judges so to tell the jury, when summing up the evidence, accompanied with those remarks and observations which the nature and peculiarities of each case might suggest and require.

Here the judges use the two expressions synonymously, "knowledge of what the law is," and "knowledge of right and wrong." If they had kept to the first, as the House of Lords did in the questions, an immense deal of argument and confusion would have been saved. The answers throughout are not nearly so clear as the questions, and bear the marks of having been retouched by many hands.

Question 3. In what terms ought the question to be left to the jury as to the prisoner's state of mind at the time when the act was committed?

This is really the most important question of all, but the judges gave no answer to it; either not being agreed upon it, or deeming it not a question as to the law of the land, but rather as to the mode of procedure of the judge when summing up.

Question 4. If a person under an insane delusion as to existing facts commits an offence in consequence thereof, is he thereby excused?

Answer. That the judges are unanimous in opinion that if the delusion were only partial, the party accused was equally liable with a person of sane mind. If the accused killed another in self-defence he would be entitled to an acquittal; but if committed for any supposed injury, he would then be liable to the punishment awarded by the laws to his crime.

In this answer we have a very strange expression, viz. "partial delusion," which ought most certainly to have been explained. What it means no one can say. In all probability the notion of partial insanity, as it is sometimes called, is that which the judges intended to convey. With regard to their exposition of the law respecting delusions, the difficulty always is to ascertain in an insane mind whether we have got to the end of the delusions. The connexion between an ascertainable delusion and a given act is one which frequently the patient himself is unable to trace, still less can any one else.

The sentence, "If the accused killed another in self-defence," &c. is nonsense as it stands. The meaning obviously is, "If under a delusion he thinks another man is going to take away his life, and he kills that man, as he supposes, in self-defence," &c. This probably is an error of *The Times'* reporter.

Question 5. Can a medical man conversant with the disease of insanity, who never saw the prisoner previous to the trial, but who was present during the whole trial, and the examination of all the witnesses, be asked his opinion as to the state of the prisoner's mind at the time of the commission of the alleged crime, or his opinion whether the prisoner was conscious at the time of doing the act that he was acting contrary to the law? or whether he was labouring under any and what delusion at the time?

Answer. The judges were of opinion that the question could not be put to the witness in the precise form stated above, for by doing so they would be assuming that the facts had been proved. That was a question which ought to go to the jury exclusively. When the facts were proved and admitted, then the question, as one of science, could generally be put to a witness under the circumstances stated in the interrogatory.

This question refers altogether to a matter of procedure, and arose out of the way in which certain witnesses had been examined on the trial of Macnaughten. The question, be it observed, still speaks of "consciousness of acting contrary to the law," and avoids, as the House of Lords does throughout, the expression "knowledge of right and wrong."

Of these questions and answers an eminent physician has said:—"It is probable that they can do little good and little harm; for not one of the able men engaged in their construction will be likely to do violence to his good sense or his humanity by allowing himself to be either restrained or constrained by them in opposition to trustworthy evidence of undoubted cerebro-mental disease." Of this I can only say, would it were so. They are supposed to be the authoritative exposition of the law as it affects the insane, as juries are constantly told. That they are a very imperfect exposition must be evident both to professional and lay readers. With the greatest deference to the illustrious bench and to the legal profession generally, I venture to point out some imperfections. The questions seem to have been put by the Lords with reference only to the trial of Macnaughten, and similar cases of delusional insanity. They appear to have arisen out of the debate in the House; and in the same way the answers seem to have been suggested by the opinions of former judges, quoted by the Lord Chancellor in his speech. There is a point which must be considered in every criminal case, which must be either directly or indirectly laid before every jury: this is, the freedom of the will of the accused person, be he of sound or unsound mind. The arraignment is for "wilful murder." An individual coerced in any way cannot be responsible. An individual whose volition is coerced by mental disease cannot be responsible. No one supposes, no one can suppose, that knowledge of what the law forbids, or knowledge of right and wrong, necessarily implies a perfect power of will, a perfect facility of choosing between right and wrong. Judges recognizing this truth have occasionally summed up in direct opposition to these answers. One said,— "It was not merely for them to consider whether the prisoner knew right from wrong, but whether he was at the time he committed the offence deranged or not." This question of sound or unsound will is not alluded to in any way in these answers of the judges. They cannot, therefore, be looked upon as a complete exposition of the law, but must be taken merely as an explanation of it in one particular.

I will now consider the opinion of an eminent lawyer of the present day, Mr. Fitzjames Stephen, who has published an extremely interesting paper on the subject in the volume of the Social Science Association for

1864. Mr. Stephen points out much confusion which exists in people's minds when they discuss this question, which is, Can a madman commit murder? What are the mental elements of the crime of murder? How far does the fact that a man is mad prove the absence of those elements, or any of them? The question whether a madman ought to be hanged is quite irrelevant; as is, of course, the whole question of capital punishment. Equally irrelevant is the question of procedure. How madness is to be established is quite a different thing from how it is to be dealt with when it is established. There is constantly a confusion between the evidence by which a proposition is proved, and the proposition to prove which the evidence is given. Madness is evidence of irresponsibility and incompetence, but does not constitute irresponsibility or incompetence. The issue in every criminal trial is, whether or not the act was wilful or malicious: the existence of madness would be evidence against will or malice. Thus limiting the subject, Mr. Stephen proceeds to show that the law is not to blame for the way in which it deals with questions of responsibility and mental competence in criminal cases. According to the law every crime has, as a rule, three moral conditions:—1. Its character as a voluntary act. 2. Knowledge of the character of the act. 3. Knowledge of the fact that the law forbids it. Of these the law presumes the presence of the last in every case. Mr. Stephen makes some remarks, however, on the other two. "The meaning of a wilful or voluntary act is a set of bodily motions preceded by an appropriate act of the will. This can be made no clearer, simply because the only evidence to be had on the subject is that which each of us carries about in his own person." This may be a sufficient definition for a lawyer; but the question of sound or unsound will is one of the greatest importance to the medical witness, who has to pronounce upon it according to the teaching of his science; and to pronounce upon it, not as he himself, but as the accused "carries it about in his person." Mr. Stephen's second moral condition is knowledge of the character of the act, differing from the judge's knowledge of right and wrong. This he confesses to be hard to define. If pushed to its limits, I think it means no more than his third—knowledge that the law forbids the act; for by fanatics and such like the character of an act may be firmly believed to be not criminal but righteous.

If a man has knowledge of either of these kinds, and the power to do or abstain from doing the act in question, he is competent and responsible in English law, and insanity comes into contact with law as a fact given in evidence by a party interested in rebutting the legal presumption of competency as applied to a particular case. This is Mr. Stephen's position, and it appears a perfectly good one. He afterwards goes on to apply this to cases of insanity, and especially to one form *viz.* delusional insanity. He gives three cases of crimes committed by persons under delusions. In two cases he says the delusions would excuse the crime. In the other, the lunatic would be responsible. He supposes

the delusion to be that the man's finger is made of glass; if we could remove the veil which conceals the operations of the mind, and trace them to their results, and we found that a murder was committed, not in consequence of this delusion, but from old-standing malice, and with the fullest knowledge of the nature of the act, the murderer would be responsible. But we never can look into the working of the mind; therefore the external facts alone form the evidence from which the mental elements of the action must be inferred. Mr. Stephen very wisely says nothing about the power of distinguishing right from wrong, but as it is often discussed, especially by lawyers, it will be as well to examine it briefly. We hear physicians, even psychological physicians, say that the insane, that is, the partially insane, or monomaniacs, as they are called, "know right from wrong," and that they are amenable to punishment. And not unfrequently it has been said that the order and discipline of asylums is maintained by acting on this principle—by a system of rewards and punishments, and that without such discipline a large number of lunatics could not be managed by a small staff of attendants. Here there is a small element of truth, and a large amount of error. It is not to be denied that certain psychologists who hold peculiar views as to the nature of insanity, have taught that it is to be cured by rebuke and threats and stripes. These physicians hold it to be a depraved condition of the spiritual essence, to be restored by moral treatment, *i.e.* rigour and punishment, not by medical treatment properly so called. But all modern research into the nature and pathology of mental disorder, tends to an opposite conclusion, and the whole tenor of the observations and suggestions of the Commissioners in Lunacy is to prevent anything like the application of punishment to insane patients. A large asylum is managed by a comparatively small number of officers, not because the many are afraid of the few, but because, though few, the officers are always many in respect of each one patient. The essential characteristic of insanity is that each insane patient is by his disease cut off and isolated from those around him. The combination of a number is a thing unknown. All sympathy with others, all power of uniting for a common object, is at an end. The insane live in an asylum, each self-centred, each constituting his own entire *cosmos*. There are many patients who conduct themselves quietly, and in most respects rationally, in an asylum. They are quite capable of criticizing the conduct of others; they are apparently conscious of right and wrong. Such patients have indulgences, recreations, and so on, according as they behave; and this has been called a system of rewards and punishments, but it is a system specially adapted to the insane, just as that which we apply to children is adapted to their mental calibre. For it is only supposed that they know right from wrong in a limited and clouded way. On points where their insanity causes misconduct, where they commit acts arising out of insane notions, no one even thinks of applying punishment in an asylum, still less of handing them over to the law. In a recent article in *The*

Times, an interesting account was given of a number of homicidal patients confined in the State Asylum at Broadmoor. If an attack is made on an attendant by one of these, no one would think of punishing the patient or of handing him over to the police. Some patients are perpetually attempting suicide, who tell you every day they know that it is very wicked. Another is ever on the alert to set fire to the house; another will steal; another will destroy everything he can; yet in the abstract all these patients know right from wrong. English lawyers base all their dogmas on the assumption that insanity is a lesion of the intellectual faculties only, but this is a very antiquated psychology. Over and over again we read in the speeches of counsel and in the summing-up of judges, that "delusion is the true character of insanity. That where it cannot be predicated of a man standing for life or death for a crime, he ought not to be acquitted."* Yet the ablest psychologists of this and foreign countries are of opinion that intellectual lesion, in the majority of cases, is a secondary phenomenon following lesion of some other portion of the mental or bodily organism. This is not the place for a medical treatise on insanity, but I cannot help mentioning certain classes of cases, and very different ones, in each of which homicide is the chief or a frequent symptom. We may divide them thus:—

I.—Cases in which there is an ascertainable loss or aberration of intellect.

II.—Cases in which the intellect is apparently unaffected.

I.—In the first group we must place all cases from total loss of mind down to what is called monomania, evidenced by perhaps a single delusion.

1. And first in this group we place the idiot, who, as Lord Coke says, is from his nativity by a perpetual infirmity *non compos mentis*. The idiot may commit murder from wanton mischief or utter folly. But in extreme cases the idiocy will be apparent, and the accused would probably be always found insane on arraignment. Cases, however, not of unmistakable idiocy, but of congenital weakness of intellect or imbecility, often give rise to much contention. Not long after Mr. Drummond was murdered, a man named Higginson was tried before Mr. Justice Maule. His imbecility was sworn to by the surgeon and all the officers of the prison, but he was hanged nevertheless.

2. There may be loss of mind, *dementia*, not congenital, but the result of brain disease.

3. There may be raving madness, mania, frenzy, which will be at once evident to judge and jury. In these forms, extreme idiocy, dementia, and raving mania, the accused cannot be supposed to have true volition, or to know the true character of his act.

4. We next find delusional insanity, which is the form about which there has been most debate, and the only one discussed by the judges as coming under the denomination of monomania or partial insanity. The

* Mr. Erskine.—Trial of Hadfield.

subjects of the most celebrated trials have been for the most part cases of delusional insanity. Lawyers go so far as to say that the delusion and the act must be connected to deliver from responsibility. But this is what can never be done. It is false philosophy and false psychology to attempt to do it.

Instead of delusions proper, we may find hallucinations or illusions. As regards the legal question, these all come under the same category. In all these states of mind, homicide may be and has been committed most frequently under the influence of delusion or hallucination.

II.—In the second division are to be placed several classes of homicidal insanity, in which no intellectual deficiency or aberration is discoverable, and these are the great difficulties for the bench, the bar, and the jury. These are the cases which have caused the greatest outcry, where it has been said that mad doctors have set up what they have termed *moral* or *impulsive insanity* as a mere excuse, and where the whole trial has been looked upon as a farce. The phrase *moral insanity* in no way conveys a true or adequate idea of these mental states. In the majority of them there is disease of some nerve-centre, recognizable by those who study such diseases, though they will hardly convince a jury of it. Many of them are analogous to certain bodily diseases, also connected with nerve-centres.

1. First, we may mention one where the bodily and mental disease seem as it were to meet, where not unfrequently the one takes the place of the other. This is epileptic insanity. Cases are on record of furious homicidal attacks, which followed close upon an attack of epilepsy. Others are related where the epilepsy ceased, and in place of it a disturbance of mental cerebral action arose, so that instead of an epileptic fit a sudden fit of homicidal insanity manifested itself. These are cases where, by cerebral disorder, phenomena are produced which are closely allied to the convulsive action of epilepsy, and during which volition, and the consciousness of right and wrong, and of the character of the act, are for the time suspended.

2. Take another class of cases somewhat akin to the foregoing. Often in women, and occasionally in men, we meet with a short transient attack of violent mania, which has been called *hysterical* or *transitory* mania. If, as not unfrequently happens, a person commits homicide in one of these short paroxysmal attacks, few would be able a week afterwards to find enough insanity in him, from mere personal examination, to deliver him from responsibility when tried before a jury. When the paroxysm has passed off, such persons are often unaware of what has happened. On the other hand, they sometimes feel its approach, and beg to be restrained; nay, will even tie themselves, that they may commit no violence.

3. We find a number of people whose whole insanity is a homicidal impulse; who feel it, not occasionally but constantly; and who will put it in practice whenever opportunity offers. It is a chronic desire to kill.

Many thought Macnaughten ought to have been hanged, because he showed purpose and design; but these men will lay their plans for weeks and months. Witness the man who hid his knife under the floor, as related in *The Times'* article on the Broadmoor Asylum. Most asylum officers can point to cases of this sort; to patients who show no other insanity, but are known to have made homicidal attack after attack, and who have probably inherited the disease. In fact, this last class is generally hereditary.

4. Arising also from hereditary taint, homicidal insanity sometimes shows itself in quite young children—children of seven and eight years of age. These paroxysmal attacks of violence are valuable lessons in mental disease. They ought to teach us much which will assist us in the appreciation of disordered brain action as we find it in adults. They ought to teach us, and teach juries, that we must look to facts, and not to our own fancied and subjective consciousness of right and wrong.*

These, then, are the conditions of a crime on which evidence has to be given before a jury. Was the prisoner's *volition*, his power of abstaining from the act, in a sound or a diseased state when he committed it? Secondly, had he at the same time an adequate knowledge of the character of his act? Did he, in plain words, know what he was about? On these, which are both questions of mental science, evidence must be given which will enable the jury to form an opinion on the responsibility of the accused, which is the issue for them. The law, then, being perfectly clear, and the so-called legal tests of responsibility being also clear—supposing these tests, and not half of them, are properly applied—where is the fault, whence arises the scandal, the dissatisfaction, the contradiction which prevails whenever a criminal trial takes place involving the question of insanity? Clearly it must be due to the mode of procedure. Let us for a moment contrast the practice in this respect in civil and criminal cases. The commonest civil case is a commission *de lunatico inquirendo*. Here is tried the competency of an individual to manage his property. Consider what safeguards the law throws around him. First, a petition must be presented to the Lord Chancellor or the Lords Justices, and *prima facie* evidence given on affidavit that the party is a lunatic. When this petition is granted, and an inquiry ordered, the alleged lunatic may demand that it be held before a jury, which jury will be a special jury. I need not remind my readers of the difference between the decision of a special and that of a common jury, when such a question as mental disease has to be investigated. Either the Commissioner is a Master in Lunacy, whose whole attention is given to such cases, or the Lord Chancellor may, if he think fit, direct that it shall be tried before a judge of one of the superior courts of common law. The counsel are men who are supposed to have practised specially in such inquiries. In fact, the whole

* See an article by Dr. Maudsley on "Homicidal Insanity," in No. 47 of the *Journal of Mental Science*.

court is adapted and devised to well and truly try the important question whether A. B. is, or is not, competent to manage himself and his affairs. Nor is this all. The alleged lunatic is examined personally and orally before the jury; and so they have the opportunity of testing the truth and falsehood of what is said of him.

Now look at a criminal trial. An insane man kills some one, and in a few days perhaps he is put on his trial for wilful murder. The assize town may be obscure and remote; he may be poor, far too poor to pay for any defence. If his insanity is not patent and undoubted, most probably he will be hanged without the slightest chance of his case being properly investigated. Some barrister will be asked to defend him, but he will not be able to procure scientific evidence at a moment's notice. Bellingham, who shot Mr. Perceval, was an undoubted lunatic. He shot him about five o'clock on Monday afternoon, May 11th. At the same hour of Monday, May 18th, seven days after, his body was in the dissecting-room. Chief Justice Mansfield refused to postpone the trial, though affidavits were made that evidence could be procured from Liverpool which would certainly prove him to be insane. The prisoner then will be found guilty, and next comes the question whether the trial shall be turned into a farce by the case being reheard in the Home Secretary's office, or whether he shall be hanged forthwith.

But supposing the accused is not a pauper, but a man of means, and can pay for a defence, how does it stand with him? Witnesses are called for the defence: but these are notoriously *ex-parte* witnesses, paid witnesses, who are retained, as are the counsel, for the defence. And on the other side the prosecution ranges its witnesses, also *ex-parte* witnesses, who say that the prisoner knows right from wrong. The Lord Chancellor in his speech on Macnaughten's trial stated that two medical gentlemen watched the case on behalf of the Crown, but took the view of the witnesses for the defence. These gentlemen were not put in the witness-box at all. These witnesses are of course all *experts*, men versed in insanity; but besides these there are generally called by the Crown certain medical men, not practising amongst the insane, but following the general walk of their profession, who, however, in the eyes of a jury are equally doctors, equally experts. A juryman in a country town thinks his own doctor, who doctors his wife and family, quite as good, or a great deal better, than "those mad doctors." And the doctor does not trouble the jury with any views about *volition* or *knowledge*, but he says "he doesn't see any insanity in the man," which is quite true. Trial by jury is a great institution, but trial of perhaps the very hardest point of all science or philosophy by a country common jury is pushing things a long way. Mr. Fitzjames Stephen in the before-mentioned paper says:—"It is not to be denied that so long as great ignorance exists upon matters of physical and medical science in all classes, physicians will occasionally have to submit to the mortification of seeing not only the jury, but the bar and bench itself, receive, with scornful incredulity or self-satisfied ignorance,

evidence which ought to be received with respect and attention." And a no less eminent physician says :—"The English public have a natural fondness for trial by jury, and like to be hanged or acquitted, as the case may be, through their peers, however incompetent and casually chosen, rather than on any other terms. But in the above class of cases the interest at stake and the distinction between madness and badness are far too fine for so coarse a tribunal. The philosopher, indeed, cannot fail to observe, that the views both of judges and advocates are insensibly lowered down to the dimensions of the very incompetent body on whom the decision ultimately rests."

There is another circumstance which tends to increase the doubt and difficulty arising in criminal trials where insanity is pleaded : this is their rarity and the magnitude of the crime. Acts of violence and breaches of the peace are of course committed every day by the insane ; but these, for the most part, never come before a jury. They are virtually tried by the magistrates, if they get so far as them ; and by them they are sent to asylums, or are given over to the custody of their friends. Every asylum contains patients who have committed breaches of the law of various kinds, but have never been brought to trial. So that the cases which do come before a jury are either cases of homicide, which cannot be disposed of in any other way, or cases where the insanity is very doubtful, and where the plea is looked on with great suspicion, as in the so-called cases of *kleptomania*, &c. The consequence of this is, that juries seldom see genuine and undoubted cases of insanity in persons charged with minor offences, but they chiefly have to deal with startling and terrible cases of homicide, about which men's minds are greatly roused, and where all the feeling about capital punishment and the like comes in. If juries recognized insanity frequently in the former class of offenders, they would be more prepared to recognize it in insane persons charged with a capital offence, and less disposed to look upon it merely as an excuse to avoid the punishment due to such a crime.

If, then, the law is not at fault, if the whole difficulty with regard to this question is one of procedure, it will not be difficult to find the remedy. Good and sufficient evidence must be given, and this must be laid before the jury with a scientific weight and method that is altogether wanting now. Above all, the scientific evidence must be preserved from the stigma, which is always attached to it now, of being altogether *ex parte* and paid. That independent evidence is of great weight, is shown by this incident. When Macnaughten was tried, in addition to the witnesses who were retained for the defence, two medical men, Messrs. Aston Key and Winslow, volunteered their evidence as independent witnesses, and the Chief Justice when summing up said—"We feel the evidence, especially that of the two last medical gentlemen, *who are strangers to both sides*, and only observers of the case, to be very strong, and sufficient to induce my learned brother and myself to stop the case."

The witnesses in such cases should be officers of the State, as indepen-

dent as are the Commissioners in Lunacy themselves, who shall give such evidence upon the trial as shall satisfy the court, the jury, and the public, and put a stop to any demand that a case shall be reheard. This suggestion is not new, but it is in reality the only one that can be made. If such assessors or State witnesses were appointed, we should not be told by Lord Chancellors "that it is not necessary a man should have studied the subject of insanity in order to form a conclusion whether a man is or is not a lunatic." They should be men who, by their scientific reputation, their character and position, would satisfy both juries and the public that their opinion ought to be listened to. I do not presume to lay down the exact mode in which such a scheme might be carried out. Doubtless difficulties will arise, and will present themselves to a legal mind. But there are none which may not be overcome. The principle is not new, either in this country or in others. The Trinity brethren are called in, in this way. In France, no trial where the plea of insanity is raised, is concluded without reference to experts. It will be long, however, before we can rival France in the treatment of disputed questions of science. In France a man of science is looked upon as a man of rank and mark. Here he is only a practising physician, who is perforce retained as a witness on this side or that, who is paid to give his evidence, and whose evidence is looked upon as worth just that which is paid for it. When a murder is committed, and the plea of insanity raised, the Crown ought to commission its experts to examine the accused, his history and antecedents, and sufficient time should be allowed for this to be done thoroughly. Such experts assisting the court would analyze the evidence given for the defence, and would control the questions put by counsel to witnesses, which are often simply nonsensical, and lead to still more nonsensical answers. If the accused were really insane, it would be the duty of such assessors to expound his insanity to the jury independently of the witnesses for the defence.

Lawyers are much afraid that doctors wish to usurp the functions of the bench, the bar, and the jury. Doctors, however, wish nothing of the sort. The great mass of medical men do not in the least degree desire to be called as witnesses in these cases. They would be glad that the honour of the whole profession should be spared the scandals which constantly arise out of the present system of procuring evidence, and they would gladly depute to the chosen few of their order the task of assisting the officers of the Crown. Some lawyers deny that medical men are the best judges of insanity. They maintain that it is a subject on which others are as competent to give an opinion as doctors. But it is true that mental science has progressed just so far as it has owed in the aid of physiology. Notoriously the most eminent of living thinkers and writers on psychological subjects, are they who have most studied human and comparative physiology, and as mental science is a question of physiology, so is mental disease a question of pathology; and when a medical witness is examined in a court of justice, his evidence must not consist of statements of his own ideas on insanity or depravity, or metaphysical disquisitions on right

or wrong, but he must be able to say, from his knowledge and experience, whether in the accused there are, or are not, symptoms of disease, of diseased brain structure, or function, of which he can give a diagnosis such as he would give to other medical men, such as he would give in any other case,—a diagnosis based on the history, age, antecedents, and physical appearance of the individual, hereditary tendency, previous disorders, accidents, or the like. Evidence like this alone is valuable, and if not *ex parte*, would be convincing to all. One reason why lawyers are so bitter against doctors is that they are totally powerless, unless assisted, to detect the medical fallacies propounded by witnesses for the defence. Witness the trials of Palmer and Smethurst, and many of those where the plea of insanity has been set up. If scientific assessors had been assisting the court, we should never have heard some of the theories which, on different occasions, have been put forward.

One word in conclusion. People in the present day are very fond of boasting of the modern treatment of the insane. We don't shut them up now in gloomy bastilles; we don't fasten them to a bar by a sliding chain; nay, we don't even put them in strait-waistcoats; yet it is much to be feared that of the real nature of insanity men's knowledge is but little advanced, while their feelings towards "lunatics" are much what they were a great many years ago. Most people would far rather that they were buried as dead out of their sight. Hear the experience of those who at any time have taken some half-dozen patients to a sea-side place—patients orderly, well-dressed, tranquil—the very class which lawyers call the "partially insane." Straightway the whole town rises in arms, and threats and imprecations are bestowed upon the "mad doctor" who dares to bring his lunatics betwixt the wind and the visitors' nobility. Folks think of them as pariahs and outcasts, and stare at them as if each was a Macnaughten. If the late Mr. Van Amburgh had walked every morning on the beach with his feline troupe, he would have excited far more interest and no more fear. But if one of these same lunatics, by reason of his lunacy, slays a man, Society rises and exclaims, "He knows right from wrong: let him be hanged."

A Holiday in Venice.

VENICE, like many other beautiful widows, is not indisposed sometimes to throw off her weeds, and to display her singular and almost unparalleled beauty adorned as becomes it. She has mourned long, and there are rumours (no idle scandal, I believe,) that a younger, nobler, more powerful bridegroom, will ere long claim her. Meanwhile, though still in mourning when I saw her for the first time, an accidental circumstance revealed her to me, much as she might have appeared in the glorious days of old, and as she hopes, and we all hope, she again may one day be.

The old Venetian festivals were usually held in the open air. The three elements which, so magically transfused into each other, make Venice (air, sky, and water), were all called upon to contribute to the pleasures of the Venetians. Music and dancing and suppers, &c. &c. were rarely enjoyed between four walls. The softness of the luxurious climate, the splendour of its glittering nights, had a part in all their amusements. To all invitations to sing, to sup, or to play were added the words "al fresco," and finally "fresco" was the word used to indicate all festivals.

On the 12th of May, the second evening, I think, after our arrival, we left the hotel with the mere expectation, exquisite as that of itself was, of spending a quiet moonlight night on the water. The gondola shot from the steps of the garden, and for a few minutes we seemed to be alone on the canal. Above, was the soft darkness of the sky; around, a shimmering haze of transparent air, pregnant of stars soon to be born; below, the liquid shining blackness, through which we cut our way. But suddenly, far off, we heard sounds of music, and then, as if evoked by the sound, there floated slowly towards us a train of luminous apparitions; gondolas, with rows of coloured lamps of every tint and shape, slung to the square rods of the awnings, and rowed by gondoliers in their holiday costume of white, with particoloured sashes looped up at the sides. We inquired what it was. It was a "fresco" in honour of some Austrian princess, who had arrived that afternoon, and was going to leave the next morning. The military bands had been ordered to serenade her, and this was the result.

The effect was beautiful. The two illuminated barges containing the two orchestras were moored, one at the Rialto and one at the Piazzetta, and it seemed as if beds of gay flowers were gliding down the canal, from end to end, between two lofty variegated banks; or as if a flight of those fairy birds, with silver beaks and peacock tails, of which Eastern stories tell us, were fluttering to and fro their jewelled nests over a magic lake. Without volition or apparent motion, and led on

only by this chord of melody, we followed the other boats. It was like a *pas de fascination*. Siren echoes sucked us in, as in a vortex, but happily to no tragical issue.

All the palaces occupied by foreigners were illuminated. Those inhabited by Venetians were fast shut. But the music was Italian, though played by Austrians in honour of an Austrian, and must have penetrated triumphantly within those barred shutters and closed jalousies. It is, after all, to the conquered that the conquerors owe all that refines, solaces, and exalts their lives. Art and nature are still noblest and fairest here, and from this primacy no Teuton or Gaul can degrade the Italians.

So, vibrating to the Rialto from the Piazzetta, from the Piazzetta to the Rialto, we passed the night. From the wondrous single arch which curves over the Grand Canal, and which, illuminated as it then was, lifted its glittering crescent as a barrier against the East, to the marvellous palace which yet retained the flush of sunset on its walls, majestic, steadfast, and prophetic, the vanguard of the West, the whole history of Venice was enclosed between those two limits, and now, as ever, those extreme points were linked together by a wreath of pleasure. Then there was a pause, the music ceased, and the bond was broken. The crowd of boats, like a broken necklace, dropped, bead by bead, asunder, and were dispersed.

In no other city of the world could such a fête have been improvised on such a short notice. But the Venetians have an indolent adaptability to all that is called pleasure which is peculiarly their own. Are they not the descendants of that people who kept festival for the space of one whole year on the accession, in 1423, of Foscari to the Dogeship? Poor Foscari! did he recall that time, when, thirty-four years later, he stood on the great staircase, listening to the clanging of the bell which announced that (he yet living) Venice had chosen another Doge?

This city took possession of heart and mind and memory as none other has ever done; and though I may never see it again, I should be able after any length of time, to look back on recollections of it, clear, defined, and glowing as its own pictures, or crystallized into marvellous fragments, like the glittering slides of a kaleidoscope.

It is not, however, the Venice which defied the Pope and fought the infidel, not the queenly Venice of Philip de Comynes, with its marble palaces inlaid with porphyry and serpentine, its mosaics and its gems, not the Venice of Tintoret and Titian, not the Venice of Shakspeare and Otway and Goethe and Byron, which was so livingly impressed on me, but the Venice of Arlecchino and Brighella, of Pantalone and the doctor, the Venice which masqued itself during the whole carnival, and crowded the Piazza di San Marco with Ciarlatani and Pantaloni and Illustrissimi and Tati, and danced and sung, along the new and old procuratie, the Venice that moved, breathed, and lived in pleasure, where cafés remained open all night long, and suppers and serenades and comedies filled the

hours from sunset to sunrise—in short the Venice of Goldoni, the Venice of Galuppi, the Venice

Where young people took their pleasure when the sea was warm in May, Balls and masks begun at midnight burning ever to midday.*

It is always the fashion to connect Italy with daggers and secret societies and revolutions in the present, and mediæval triumphs in the past, but there is also a middle region which is less known to us.

The man who being asked to describe Italian landscape, made a succinct classification of its trees, by saying, he had seen nothing but umbrellas open and umbrellas shut, would describe its history under the same limitations. And yet, besides pines and cypresses are vines and olives, and between the lofty glories of the past and the dark shadows of the first part of the present century, is a period which as naturally grew out of the former, and alas! led to the latter, as the tree passes from the virile verdure of spring to the brilliant hectic of autumn, and from thence to the withered ghastliness of winter.

The best records of the Venice of this period are to be found in the plays and memoirs of Goldoni. Goldoni was born in 1707 during the brief dogeship of Alvise Mocenigo. His memoirs are charming. His life was joyous, lively, fortunate throughout. He was a good son, brother, husband, and an indulgent and faithful friend. In spite of the impressionability of his nature, and the laxity of morals which was permitted to young men at that time, his shrewdness of temper as well as his soundness of principle kept him pure from all grossness or prodigality in his diversions. But what a picture of sparkling Bohemian enjoyment he paints for us in this autobiography. Wherever we open the genial pages we find such records as these:—

"We there passed four months with the greatest delight in the world;" or, "I there parted from the pleasantest persons in all Italy." From the time in the early chapters when he describes a "flight" he made from college with some actors he had made acquaintance with at Rimini, and gives us details, graphic as a chromo-lithograph, of the journey from Rimini to Chioggia, or, as he calls it, Chiozza, the book is a succession of spirited scenes. "Our company consisted of twelve men and women, dogs, cats, monkeys, parrots, birds, doves, and a lamb; in short, a perfect Noah's ark. And we passed three days of continual enjoyment—such breakfasts, such dinners, such music, such laughter, and such flirtations! The actresses were pretty, and there was a dear little girl among them who always acted the part of the servant in their representations, for whose sake I have ever since had a tenderness for waiting-maids on the stage, and *such a prima donna!*" The account of his arrival, of his friend the manager leaving the truant in the ante-room while he prepared Madame Goldoni, his mother, to receive him, and the manner in which, having forgiven him for his escapade, the kind mother threw herself in the breach to obtain pardon from his father, is full of humour. The father thought

* Browning.

it his duty to be severe at first, but gradually as the names of the accomplices were revealed (they happened to be some far-famed comedians,) the old Adam awoke in the avvocato Goldoni's breast, and after awful denunciations on his son, he was startled, then interested, then charmed by these names, and finally went himself with his prodigal to the theatre. All this is told in as admirable a scene as could be found in any comedy.

Rather later is another journey, which seems literally to verify Gray's famous line—

Youth at the prow and pleasure at the helm.

He and a company of eight other young men went by water from Pavia to Chioggia. They were all musicians but himself. Three played on the violin, there were two oboes, there was a French-horn, a violoncello, and a guitar, and Goldoni composed the songs, or declaimed poetical descriptions of their daily life. On each bank of the Po, crowds followed the barque, listening to the music, and as payment for the pleasure given by them, wherever they stopped to pass the night, they were received with the most courteous hospitality, and suppers and balls given in their honour. Then, with what quiet irony he tells us of his college life, under the Padre Candini, "who professed all the virtues, as well as the science of scholastic logic, and was such a bore. His digressions, his scholastic twists, seemed to me useless; and his Barbara and Baralipton, ridiculous. A more useful, and certainly a more pleasant philosophy I found in Plautus, Terence, Aristophanes, and in fragments of Menander. In short, the philosophy which was then taught to the young, was eternally that of St. Thomas Aquinas, or of Scotus; the peripatetic, or the mixed; and each and all only seemed to me to remove me further from the philosophy of common sense."

There is also something very naïf and thoroughly Venetian in the ecstasy with which he describes a season of perfect rest he spent at Genoa after a very hardworked period at Venice. "Oh!" he says from his heart, "how sweet it is, after having worked very hard, to pass a short time *doing nothing*. He is not ashamed of enjoying absolute idleness. And yet he was a good worker. Two hundred dramatic productions, comedies, burlettas, operas, dramas, bear his name. He was not an heroic person at all, nor a great genius, but he was beloved by his friends and relatives, and an author of great versatility, quick wit, buoyant humour and polished satire.

His comedies are written in pithy, incisive, easy dialogue. His personages talk brilliantly and naturally. He made admirable use of his native dialect in some of his plays. The plots are closely knit and well unravelled. If the intrigue and the scope of them seem to turn on conventional proprieties, or commonplace virtues, we must remember it was the age *par excellence* of decorous platitudes and arithmetical morality. If so much was foregone on earth, so much was bestowed in heaven. It was the age of the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*. It is amusing to think how our

loved and gentle Addison penetrated even to Venice, and that in those balconies with their twisted pillars, and elaborate iron-work, and marble inlaid cornices, lovely ladies bent over the sparkling pages, caught a faint reflection of their spirit, tried forthwith to instruct themselves, and in the intervals between coffee and love-making began to babble a soft philosophy to their lovers.

In estimating Goldoni's dramatic powers, we must remember the primitive and barbaric state in which he found the stage. In some parts of Italy, and throughout the Pontifical territory, the female parts were acted by youths and not women. It was then the custom to write *commedie di trucco*: plays in which the plots were settled, the parts cast, the knot to be cut through explained, and the actors were then left to improvise the rest.

Four personages were always indispensable, whatever might be the subject of the play, whoever were the hero and heroine, and wherever was the *mise en scène*: Pantalone, the Venetian merchant (the *père noble*), the doctor, a Bolognese advocate, Brighella and Arlecchino, Bergamesque servants. Brighella was a knave and a rogue, Arlecchino a butt and a fool.

The very dresses were traditional, and all wore masks. Pantalone was from time immemorial dressed in the old Venetian costume, black, with scarlet shirt, tights, and stockings.

The doctor wore the costume of the University of Bologna. So faithful was the clothing of this type, that the disfiguring stain on the brow and nose of the mask was religiously adhered to, because a famous ancient lawyer of Bologna had a port-wine mark.

Brighella's mask was almost black; a caricature of the sun-burned complexions of the poor peasants in the rugged and scorching country round Bergamo. There were varieties of Brighelli called Finocchio, Fichetti, Scappini, but under whatever name he appeared he was invariably a thief, a liar, and a Bergamesque.

The Arlecchini were called sometimes Traccagnini, Truffaldini, Graddellini, and Mezzettini, but they were always dolts and beggars. Their particoloured costume was the representation of the different rags and scraps with which such persons clothe themselves, and the hare's-tail which ornaments them is even now used by the contadini in the neighbourhood of Bergamo.

The ladies'-maid who played such an important part as an inferior *Deus ex machina* in these entertainments, was invariably represented as a Florentine. Tuscan piquancy and astuteness being much valued by the bland Venetians.

It was Goldoni who first gradually emancipated himself from these restrictions. The necessity of four strongly-characterized and eternally identical personages, the use of the mask, so destructive to the verisimilitude of the acting, were odious to him; and though, to please some of his friends, he occasionally wrote comedies of this kind with four obligato

personages, travestied by masks, and allowed actors to improvise the dialogue, all his principal works were written according to the more wholesome and modern canons of dramatic composition. Anglo-Saxon nations can scarcely know what a power the stage is in the South. It took, and it still takes, the place of the imaginative literature which holds so large a space in the intellectual movement of Northern nations. Many of Goldoni's plays still keep the stage, one hundred years and more after they have been written, and those who have seen them well acted, cannot be surprised that they do so. They are not cynical, they do not touch the solemn depths of human character which Molière's sublime humour sounded, but they are racy and bright, and full of wit and mirth and incident, and unspeakably cheerful and good-humoured. It was this feeling that I was treading the Venice of Goldoni that made me take great pleasure in the by-paths of Venice, and I haunted chiefly the smaller canals and less known streets.

These, with their innumerable one-arched bridges, dropped like rings half in and half out of the water, and their numerous involutions and intersections, I used to thread with unfailing perseverance and interest. In all these streets the houses are more or less dilapidated; but, nevertheless, the eye cannot fail to notice, even in the most ruined-looking, some quaint fragment of cornice, or balcony, or parapet of exquisite workmanship, or graceful proportion, from which *à la Cuvier* you can build up the whole edifice, and ascertain the status of its former inhabitants. One of these I remember in the far-off regions of Sta. Maria dell' Orto, a house with balconies and curiously-arched windows. The ironwork of these balconies, though rusty and broken, yet retained a portion of their carving, and had been cut into arabesques of the lightest and most intricate design. They would have ravished the soul of a connoisseur. The grimy wooden shutters, though broken and pieced, were powerless to impart an air of vulgarity to the windows. Of their kind, these were matchless. The barred apertures of the lower floor looked eyeless and blank, but even there the ghastliness was veiled by the elaborate festoons and draperies and embroideries of a million powdery cobwebs. The stone parapet and the marble inlaid wall of the house were irreparably injured, but running along the façade on a level with the second story from the water was an alto-relievo, half defaced and obliterated, but which must have been of great antiquity. All that were left, and these were very rudely carved, were a palm-tree and a dromedary. Surely this must have been the abode in the good days long ago of some wealthy Don Leandro, with a purse full of golden zechins, made by trade in the East. What vistas of burning deserts and toiling caravans, of patient industry and daring enterprise, of the virtues and qualities which formed the corner-stone on which was reared the great republic, were brought to mind by that ruined sculpture.

I remember another. I passed it one gorgeous summer evening when the sky was all crimson and gold. It was a dark funereal corner house,

linked by a bridge to a side street, in which were a few shops. All the upper part of the house seemed the abode of mice and of spiders, but in the centre was one exquisite lozenge-paned window, with a perfect shrine of inlaid marble over it, and supported by slender pillars barely projecting a hand's breadth from the wall. An orange-striped awning hung partly over it, and threw a tawny shadow on an auburn-haired girl leaning out with a carnation on her temple, and her large lazy white hands folded over the crimson cushions of the window-sill. In every corner of Italy one finds these exquisite bits of picturesqueness, but Venice is the consecrated home of that seven-robed daughter of light which men call colour.

How could it be otherwise beneath that sky, and girdled by those lucid shallows? All the senses but one are eternally gratified in Venice, and that is only offended for a brief season. During the heat of summer beware of exploring the narrow canals in the heart of the city. If you do, you will, according to the courteous Spanish euphuism, "sniff that which is not precisely 'limones.'" But in the early spring, when the sunshine traces its bright Oriental characters in scintillating flow on the freshening lagoon; when every Venetian girl places her flower-pots on window-ledge and balcony; when every old palace-wall and arched basement wears a clothing of tender green, and there is a perfume of carnations in the air, and the murmurous water lapses against the far-off sea-wall with a sound as of a distant hum of bees, and the nightingales call from their leafy cages across the "traghetti," and caress each other with their ravishing song—then, own that every sense is blessed, and that it is good to be at Venice.

The Venetians talk less than other Italians, and when they do speak, their voices are agreeable. They are felicitously deprived of the dust and ashes which parch the throat and thicken the utterance of other nations, and they have softened their own soft Italian to a velvety idiom which is like a spoken caress. It is this silence and this absolute freedom from dust which makes Venice such a boon to hypochondriacal or neuralgic patients.

In spite, or perhaps more truly, on account of the softness of the climate, and the effeminacy which the habits of life of such a city involved, the Venetians deified vigour, manliness, and strength. To them these qualities were godlike. In other countries brutal habits enshrined purity, delicacy, sweetness; and the worship and delineation of the Madonna preponderated over that of Christ. Here churches, pictures, altars, are chiefly dedicated to Christ and to his saints. Out of sixty churches only five are devoted to the Madonna, and three to female saints. In the galleries, both private and public, one oftener sees our Saviour painted as man than as babe; oftener, I mean, in proportion to such pictures of Him in other countries. A cursory glance at any catalogue will prove this. In St. Mark's, Christ and the cross are the dominant ideas. The mosaics and the scrolls bear witness to this. The altar in

the chapel of St. Maria dei Mascoli, though actually dedicated to the Virgin, and bearing on its priceless walls the most exquisite mosaics in the church, depicting her birth, presentation, visitation, and death, is another instance of this loftier religious feeling. On the parapet of the altar is a beautiful *basso-relievo*—two angels waving censers over the cross.

But even more than by the wonders of Tintoretto and Titian and Bonifazio was I riveted by those quaint pictures of Gentile Bellini and Vittorio Carpaccio which represent, the former, the old Piazza di San Marco (before the clock-tower and the third story of the old procuratie were built, with the addition of the old mosaics and gilding of the Basilica, and a large addition to the western side of the Campanile, of the existence of which some traces still remain), and the latter the old Rialto bridge of wood with its booths and gates, and which then, from the tolls levied there, was also called Ponte del Bajutin. It was especially interesting to me to compare this old Venice with the new.

There is nothing more beautiful than the Piazza St. Marco. It is like reading a marvellous history to walk up and down it. Its deathless interest arises from its combination of the past with the present, linked together by the living human element which circulates for ever under every vicissitude of government beneath its arcades and arches. In Pisa, the dome, the baptistery, and the sepulchre stand apart in their grass-grown desolation, and the whole city seems a mournful monument of a dead faith and a buried civilization; here the mortal consecrates and immortalizes the spiritual; here the living mingle the humours, the sorrows, and the joys of this life with the church, the palace, and the clock-tower; and Faith, and Law, and Time, are old, yet ever young, linked to Eternity, age after age, by the deathless life of humanity. Enter that piazza at any time, and you will be interested, from the earliest dawn to the late night. But perhaps the happiest moment is when the whole spot is basking in the glory of the shadowless noon, when the Byzantine mosaics of the church are shining like jewels, and its pinnacles and spires lift up their white beauty to the blue heaven, and the ground is one golden sheet of sunlight, and the pigeons cluster together like an iris-hued fleece over the dome, or swoop in purple masses on the pavement, raising their dainty heads and gem-encircled throats to listen, as the bronze Moors on the clock-tower strike the hour. At all hours notice the motley groups around you, with all their oddities and peculiarities exhibited in the frank, impulsive manner common to all Italians. Observing them, we can well understand how Goldoni used to find subjects for his plays here. In fact, he tells us that being very much hurried to write a play which he had promised for the end of the Carnival, and finding that the penultimate Sunday had arrived and it was not written, he betook himself to the piazza, in the hope that some passing "*maschera*" or "*ciarlatano*" would suggest a subject to him. "I found myself," he says, "at last standing under the clock-tower, and there in five minutes a man passed who exactly fulfilled

the object I required. An old Armenian, with a long beard and clothed most dirtily and shabbily, who sold dates and dried fruits, which he called 'abagigi.' He was so inveterately assiduous in his trade that he obtained the nickname of Abagigi, and his appearance was so ridiculous that it became customary in Venice, among the 'gamins,' to tease any pretty girl by proposing Abagigi to her as a husband. As soon as I saw him I was quite contented, and went home and wrote a play, which, under the name of *Le Pettegolezze* (Scandal), had a great success."

It was one of my perpetual marvels that in all these respects Venice was so little changed. The piazza still overflowed with subjects which would have been the fortune of a playwright; comedy and drama are so interfused with daily life here, that a writer of comedies has only to transport the groups he sees before him to the theatre, or the spectator at the theatre can find again in his next evening's stroll, the types similar to those which convulsed him with laughter or touched him to tears the evening before. The very countenances are unaltered, both in their beauty and in their grotesqueness. Those noble gentlemen who look down upon us from the pictures of Tintoretto and Titian and Bassano have bequeathed their lordly features to their descendants, and the grotesque beings described by Goldoni exist still in his native city. Physically and morally, no people are less changed. In the very hotel at which we stayed I could recognize familiar types.

The master of the hotel was one. He was a short, thick-throated man of fair complexion and good features. He would have been good-looking but for his low stature. He moved with a kind of aggressive strut which I have often noticed in very short men; and gesticulated, talked, and dressed with a good deal of foppish pretension. Gaudy waistcoats and bright chains gave undue preponderance to his swelling chest, and the tight way in which he fastened his cravat made his speech stertorous and his face apoplectic. He had an ambition to be a linguist, and would gasp out feeble sentences in maimed French and choking English, and roll his eyes after the effort as if he would fall down in a fit. He might have taken his place in any one of Goldoni's plays as the typical Venetian innkeeper. His daughter was a tall, fair, stout girl, very young, but so developed in person that she looked much older than she was. She was well educated, according to Italian ideas, and very pretty and gentle-looking. She spoke French with the "grasseyant" Venetian accent, and had a soft, pleading, lady-like manner which would have gained her admittance into any society; but beneath all the languor of her step and voice I detected the true Venetian thirst for pleasure, for change, for *excitement*. "Oh! mon Dieu!" she said to me one day, "comme c'est ennuyant de voir toujours cette eau." I could not help smiling at the eternal tautology of human nature. Was there not a certain Marquis of Queensberry who was equally bored by the constant flow of the Thames?

I asked her one day if she had ever left Venice. She answered, with a spark of fire in her brown eyes, "J'ai été une fois à Milan," as if Milan,

with its noisy streets and glaring shops, was a paradise after Venice! I am afraid that in the simplest and most innocent woman there is always a very subtle germ of Bohemianism.

By-the-by, Bianca Capello must have looked in her youth like this brown-eyed, auburn-haired girl. If so it is easy to understand how so fair and plump a creature must have ravished the Duke of Tuscany. There seems certainly a resemblance, too, in the idiosyncrasy. A little tired of the Canal Grande, on which our pretty casements look, a little of that love of adventure and excitement which from the days of Desdemona and Bianca to those of Lady Glencora give such a piquancy to a charming woman—a sympathetic, impressionable, impulsive nature—*et voilà* we leave our homes and follow the Moor to Cyprus, or our plebeian lover to Florence. But the mother of this girl was no Emilia. She was a plain, plaintive-looking woman, thin and sallow and hollow-eyed. At a glance one could see her life had been a failure. She had been a puppet in the hands of her husband. No independence of action, or necessity for occupation had braced her character or exercised her faculties. Bigotry and excesses in bonbons had prematurely aged her. Sometimes, however, in crossing the court of the hotel, I used to hear her playing on the piano with great taste and some power, and thus I guessed how much sensibility and force had been immured between the walls of this house and the slow, calm waters which bounded it.

The gardener of the hotel (for the hotel boasted of a tiny garden) looked as if he had walked out of one of the pictures of Bassano in the ducal palace. He had curly dark hair, a square forehead, and a full red lip, but a great refinement and delicacy of form and figure. His manner was lethargic and reserved; and there was something patrician in the dignity with which he answered, monosyllabically, the troublesome and mostly unintelligible questions of burly foreigners. As to working in the garden, I never saw him do anything but smoke there, if that may be considered one of the duties of a gardener; but he came at sunrise and lounged about all day in picturesque attitudes, with a black velvet skull-cap on his head, and at sunset he entered his gondola, which remained till then moored to the boat-house, and, bending his graceful figure, rowed himself home. He certainly served his purpose as a decoration, but for a work-a-day world Florio seemed to me somewhat of an anachronism. He was very poor, he told me, but quite contented. "To make the groat a pound" never enters the ideas of Venetians now. "Let us make the groat last" is the pith of their political economy.

Of course I heard many lamentations on the present state of things—not so much any overt acts of tyranny on the part of the Austrians, but on the utter stagnation of all trade, the decay of the Carnival, and the increasing poverty. I firmly believe the Austrian occupation will cease. All wrong and evil cease in this world after a time or times; but I do not think, comparing the last years of the republic with what is passing now, that the preference would be given to Venice as it was then; and yet all

the traditions of the people, and their pride, are connected with the time when Venice was a republic. "Give us back our republic" is their cry. But the republic of Venice did its great work *for* the people, and *in their name*, but not *by* them. The nobles bearded the Doge and indulged the populace, but they alone governed. In these days it is the capacity for self-government which gives the measure of a nation's manhood. Are the Venetians ripe for this, or do they still need the dictatorship of the one, or the rule of the few, to hold and to sway the many? The only hope for Venice in the future is this, that she dares not separate herself from the rest of Italy. The old effete republic died and was buried, and all things must now be made new. There is resurrection from death always, but never under the same form. But it is not of politics and the future that I can now think, as I look from my window on the view before me—a view which every day baptizes into fresh beauty.

Opposite is the church of Our Lady of Salvation, with its flight of broad marble steps to the water. Beyond is the low, long stone building of the Custom-House, crowned by the bronze figure of Fortune on its golden ball. Lower still, and standing almost athwart the end of the canal, is St. George, with its well-grouped buildings and its tall campanile flinging its red reflection like a flame in the water. The sunset catches the vermilion-striped sail of that boat as it glides away into the yellow light, and the rude figure of the saint painted on it stands out in bold relief. As the evening deepens, and the glowing colours fade from the softest blue to yet softer neutral tint, and then into deepest purple, fitfully and at first afar off, and then gradually nearer and nearer, gondolas, with bands of singers or instruments, float hither and thither, and enrich the night with music. If the days in Venice are silent, the nights are vocal, and Venezia! Venezia! is the burden of all their songs.

The Platonic Doctrine of Ideas.

ONE of the most interesting questions connected with the study of Plato, is the relation of the Platonic to the real Socrates. There is, indeed, no reason to doubt that Plato, with much independent speculation of his own, has retained a very accurate picture of the life and habits of his great master. The *manner* of Socrates—his argumentative dexterity, his playfulness, his professed inability to make long speeches, and decided preference for investigations conducted by skilful questioning, his practical good sense, the plainness and familiarity of his illustrations, by which he shocked the rhetoricians of his day, and the *purpose* of Socrates—the high moral aim which pervaded all he said, and his unceasing efforts to convince his fellow-citizens of the paramount importance of truth and virtue, and the superiority of the soul to the body, while they are set forth in the pages of Plato with the most wonderful dramatic power, and with unrivalled beauty of language, have too much verisimilitude and too real a root in history to be regarded merely as the work of that glorious imagination. The teaching and method of Socrates, as represented by Plato, are quite consistent with the known facts of his life, with the hatred excited against him in the minds of the Sophists, and his subsequent condemnation by the Athenian people; and the impression produced by Xenophon is not of such a different kind as to prevent us accepting the pictures of Plato, at all events in their more prominent features. On the other hand, it might be too much to assert that any one of the Platonic dialogues is more than a very distant approach to a literal reproduction of any actual scene, while the greater number are, of course, purely imaginary, and, retaining only the manner of the master, convey the doctrines and speculations of the disciple. It would certainly have been strange if the skilled opponents of Socrates had so readily allowed themselves to be induced to give categorical answers to questions whose tendency was so plain, without the addition of some qualifying or explanatory remarks. Plato, indeed, describes their resistance to the cross-examining process with admirable skill, but real interlocutors, though they might be persuaded to desist from making orations, would never consent to answer with simple “yes” and “no.” In this respect much allowance must be made for the dialogic form. It need not be doubted that Socrates often gained decided victories over his opponents, and convicted them of not knowing that which they professed to know, nor that he sometimes sent them away angry and ashamed; but it would not have been human nature for them to have contributed to their own humiliation to such an extent as they often do in the pages of Plato. Again, there are some dialogues in which there is

no question that the real Socrates is left altogether out of sight. The speculations of the *Timæus* and the *Republic* belong to Plato and not to his master, and though the dramatic situation of the *Banquet* is exquisitely truthful, its doctrines as well as those of the *Phædrus* contain little of the genuine Socratic flavour.

It is a remarkable fact that many of the Platonic dialogues apparently come to no conclusion whatever. A question is started—What is Piety? what is Temperance? what is Fortitude? Everybody has a definition ready except Socrates, who, professing to be unable himself to give any answer, takes to pieces the definitions submitted to him for consideration, convinces the proposers that they will not hold, and finally takes his departure, leaving the matter entirely undecided. In his defence before the Athenian people, as reported by Plato—and the report has all the appearance of being substantially correct—Socrates, referring to the oracle which had declared him the wisest man in Greece, explained that he had been for some time unable to understand its meaning, but discovered at length that he was wiser than others inasmuch as he was aware of his own ignorance, while they, though equally ignorant, deemed themselves wise; and further stated that he believed himself to have a divine mission to go about convincing men of their ignorance, and persuading them to follow virtue rather than wealth and honour. These are the facts upon which Mr. Grote, in his recent work,* founds his conclusion that the aim of Socrates was purely negative and intellectual. Abstract ideas, he says, had not before been made the subject of thought, nor had pains been taken to define them accurately. The orators, the Sophists, the young men who would hereafter have the control of the State, talked loudly and freely about justice, honour, prudence, and such words were continually heard in the street, and on the exchange. No one, however, when brought to the test, could give a satisfactory explanation of any of these terms. There were many who professed to know what justice was, or what honour was, and it was the special business of the Sophists to give such instruction as would enable their pupils to argue upon questions of this kind; but all broke down before the cross-examining power of Socrates, and stood convicted of shameful ignorance, not knowing the very things with which they professed to have a special acquaintance. The result, therefore, was a painful shock, from which proceeded no knowledge indeed, but the impulse to further investigation. Mr. Grote admits that there may be different opinions about the usefulness of this procedure, but thinks there cannot be any reasonable doubt that it was really that of Socrates. Yet it would surely be very strange if one who stands before the world in the character of a martyr to truth, had spent his whole life in annoying his fellow-citizens by his ingenious questionings, with the sole view of convincing them that their fancied knowledge was worthless, and that they were unable to give faultless definitions of the abstract terms they were

* *Plato and the other Companions of Socrates.*

in the habit of using. That this was a *part* of the work of the great Athenian sage, that this was the *form* which his teaching frequently assumed, that this work even in its purely negative aspect was eminently useful, as tending to incite thought, and stimulate inquiry, may all be legitimately conceded; but it appears to us, notwithstanding, that Mr. Grote's view is very inadequate. Not only does Xenophon fail to justify that view, but the very dialogues of Plato, which are chiefly relied upon as being of a purely negative character, are not so entirely negative as Mr. Grote represents them. It was the aim of Plato in these dialogues, as we shall presently see, and it was the aim of Socrates, so far as his conversations are fairly represented there, to prove that the several virtues were not what the Athenian people thought them; to separate them from all partial interests, and as it were to disentangle the universal and the absolute from the particular and the relative. Socrates probably had no system of philosophy; but it was undoubtedly his conviction that the just and the honourable were absolute realities, not dependent upon the opinions which prevailed in Greece, or in Persia, at Athens, or at Sparta, but the same everywhere, and for all men; and it was the task of his life to lead his countrymen, in what way best he could, to see this truth. He wanted the language, perhaps, to give his doctrine the precision it afterwards acquired, but if it be supposed that this was what he aimed at, though perhaps in a somewhat dim and groping way, it will be understood how Plato, following the track upon which he had been set, subsequently developed the hints received from his master, and worked out the spirit of his teaching into a complete system of philosophy.

The doctrine of ideas, with all its splendid allegorical and poetical accompaniments, is peculiarly associated with the genius of Plato. But there is no reason why the germs of it, at least, may not belong to Socrates. Plato was clearly inspired by the intensest admiration of his master, and must have felt that he owed almost everything to his influence; otherwise, he would neither have written of him with such enthusiasm, nor made him the mouthpiece of his own philosophy. And if Socrates, upon the day on which he died, held a conversation resembling that described in the *Phædo*—and it can hardly be entirely fictitious—there is sufficient ground for believing that he gave his disciples a history of his own mind, and explained to them how he advanced, step by step, towards the doctrine of ideas, while he cheered them with the assurance that, after his decease, his soul would return to that ideal world whence it had come down. On the other hand, it might, no doubt, be plausibly urged that this mental history is more likely to be that of Plato himself. In the *Phædo* there are many traits which are probably genuinely historical, and which certainly no one would abandon so long as it was at all possible to retain them. Such, for example, are the celebrated last words—"We owe a cock to Æsculapius"—and still more the answer of Socrates, when Crito asked him how he would wish to be buried—"Just as you please, if you can catch me, and I do not escape from you. I cannot persuade

Crito, my friend, that I am the Socrates who now converses with you; but he thinks I am he whom he will presently see lying dead, and therefore he asks how he shall bury me." But it is quite possible that the main body of the dialogue may have no other foundation than the fact that Socrates conversed with his disciples upon the immortality of the soul, and expressed his own belief in the truth of the doctrine. The debt which Plato owed to his master may have been simply the stimulus to thought which he imparted to all who conversed with him, and his own devotion to the person of Socrates may be thought a sufficient warrant for the use he made of him in his writings. Undoubtedly, when we have to deal with an imagination such as Plato's, it is extremely difficult to say when we are treading upon the solid ground and when we are coursing with him, upon the winged horses of his own *Phædrus*, through the boundless realms of thought. It is unnecessary to strike the balance between such conflicting views as those which he has just indicated, or to determine precisely what share Socrates may claim in the origination of the doctrine of ideas. Let our attention now be given to the doctrine itself.

According to this doctrine, then, there is mingled with the material world in which we live a world of forms and ideas, not perceived by sense, and apprehensible through the intellect alone. Those ideas are eternal, self-existent, and uncreate, and they alone are real beings. Visible things have a quasi-existence through participation in these real essences, and are what they are—beautiful or large or round—for no other reason than that they have in them the abstract ideas of beauty or size or rotundity. There dwell justice itself, truth itself, and all other universal ideas which are reflected in the world of sense; and not only such sublime entities as these, but also the typical forms of all common things—the original man, tree, table, by partaking of whose essence all particular men, trees, and tables are what they are. Of this real world, the mind of man would have no knowledge had it not conversed with it in a former existence; and only a few are able so far to overcome the influence of the senses as to perceive it clearly. The mind, however, is immortal, not only as being incapable of destruction, but as having already enjoyed a purer and happier existence than the present, and of that blessed state some traces still remain. In the well-known language of Wordsworth, who has simply translated into poetry this Platonic doctrine:—

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:

The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,

And cometh from afar:

Not in entire forgetfulness,

And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come

From God, who is our home.

Here, bound up in walls of flesh, and impeded by passion and appetite, we dwell but in a world of shadows, and see nothing as it

really is. But in that former state we were surrounded by realities, and beheld justice and truth and beauty, and all other forms as they are in themselves, apart from all accident and change, and from the conditions of time and place. In this world, therefore, we are in a state lower than that which is by nature ours. Those who are guided by philosophy, aspire ever towards that more perfect knowledge which they once possessed, and search among the shadows for those realities with which they formerly held converse; and after death, if they have been faithful here in their efforts to overcome passion and desire, they will be completely freed from their bondage and permitted to re-enter the happy state from which they descended.

In the *Phædo*, as has been already mentioned, Socrates (or Plato) gives an interesting account of the process by which he was led to adopt this doctrine. When a young man, he says, he was a keen investigator into the causes of things, and was most anxious to discover what it was that produced the various phenomena of mind. At first he gave his attention to physical causes only, but soon becoming dissatisfied with them, and meeting at the same time with the works of Anaxagoras, he welcomed with delight the doctrine of that philosopher, who taught that intelligence is the cause of all things. Here he hoped he had found the solution of his difficulties, but he was speedily undeceived. A further acquaintance with the works of Anaxagoras proved to him that intelligence was merely put forward as a general cause, but not made use of as the explanation of particular phenomena, all of which were accounted for by physical antecedents, and by anything rather than the wise ordering of a superior intelligence directing all things to the best. At length, however, Socrates adopted a solution of his own, which he found satisfactory. He assumed the existence of ideas as absolute and eternal entities, and whenever he was called upon to account for anything possessing a certain abstract quality, he explained it by assuming that it possessed the idea itself, and that there could be no other cause whatever. He would never admit, therefore, that a thing was beautiful owing to the arrangement of its parts, its colour, its adaptation to any particular purpose, but only on account of its possessing somewhat of the true and essential beauty. Previously he had been puzzled how one man could be said to be greater than another by the head (which was itself a small thing), while the other was said to be less than the first by the very same thing. Now he knew that such expressions were absurd, and that a man could be great only by greatness, and little only by littleness. The ideas thus were the sole causes of all things, and were themselves independent entities.

Such is a general sketch of the doctrine of ideas, which, however, Plato has illustrated in various ways, and with all the wealth of his splendid genius. In one passage he compares the state of man with that of dwellers in a cave, whose backs are towards the light, and who, being so fettered that they cannot turn their heads, see nothing save the shadows of

things moving before them upon the opposite wall. In another place he describes the earth as being far larger and more beautiful than is generally supposed, the surface being indeed above the visible heavens, while we who think we occupy the upper parts, really dwell in a mere cavity, and are very much in the position of men living at the bottom of the sea, or like frogs round a marsh. Here there is a dull and heavy atmosphere, in which we ignorantly suppose the heavenly bodies move and which we call heaven; but could we ascend above it we should find that the true heaven was still far distant, and should feel as it might be fancied the fish would, were they to come up from the bottom of the sea and dwell upon our earth. With us, too, everything bears the marks of corruption. But above there is a purer and larger air; the earth is of wondrous beauty and of colours far surpassing anything our eyes have ever looked upon, and its mountains are composed of precious stones which are not, as among us, subject to corrosion or waste. Then, there are animals and men much superior to those here, and longer lived and free from disease, and who have intercourse with the gods, and see things as they really are. And in that happy world they shall hereafter dwell who have been sufficiently purified by philosophy, "and shall arrive at abodes yet more fair than those, which it is not easy to describe." Again, the soul in its disembodied state is compared to a charioteer driving a pair of winged steeds. And this comparison is applicable to the gods themselves, whose horses, however, are perfectly obedient to the rein and are therefore driven with ease; but in the case of all other souls, the horses—by which no doubt must be understood the natural impulses towards virtue and vice—differ in quality, the one being beautiful and noble, the other restive and not easy to be controlled. When, therefore, the gods ascend, as they often do, to the region above the heaven, and career round through the world of realities, those spirits which have succeeded in taming that restive and unmanageable steed have no difficulty in following, but among the rest there ensues great confusion and struggling, and a wild chase to get above the surface of heaven, and in the tumult many fail and are carried round without ever gaining a glimpse of that blessed world above; and some of the horses moreover break their wings, and in consequence drop down to the earth. Those, then, who have been happy enough to gain the upper world and feast themselves upon the true essences of things, continue secure against change, but they, upon the other hand, who have fallen to the earth, are doomed to enter a human life, and receive different lots according to the number of times they have enjoyed the Divine vision. The noblest life—that of a philosopher—is reserved for those that have seen most of the world of reality, while the others enter variously the forms of kings, statesmen, poets, down to the sophist and the tyrant. Their after-fate is regulated according to the way in which they pass their lives; but not for ten thousand years does the soul return to its former abode, nor recover its wings, but during that period goes through various lives and suffers various punishments. Only

in the case of the philosopher is there any exception to this rule. His soul, if he has three times preferred that life, is permitted to return to the upper world after three thousand years, and the wings, which even in this life began to shoot, once more attain their full vigour. For the distinction of the philosopher is that he dwells, to the best of his memory, upon those realities which he once beheld. Other souls may be so weighed down by the body, and so misled by appetite, as to mistake shadows for realities, but philosophy already partly frees the soul from its prison-house, and enables it to look behind the sensible world to those self-existent realities which are mingled with its changing appearances.

Whither, now, tend all these sublime speculations? They tend to this: that truth, beauty, and all other abstract ideas are ultimate realities, self-existent, independent, and unconditional. The poetical descriptions of the upper world, of the experiences of the disembodied spirit, of the struggles of the soul in its pre-existent state to

Soar above th' empyrial sphere
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair,

are introduced by Plato as fables, or at least as of very doubtful authenticity. He evidently intends that the poetic and imaginative elements in them shall be recognized, while, at the same time, they are to be regarded as the vehicles through which the deepest truths of his philosophy are conveyed. The doctrine of the soul's pre-existence was no doubt perfectly serious, and so probably was the doctrine that all knowledge worthy of the name, all acquaintance with things in themselves, is but the remembrance of that former happy state. And that sensible things are but shadows, and abstract ideas the only realities, is the central truth of the entire system; but all the rest is merely the clothing which Plato has furnished from his own abounding imagination. Now, if abstract ideas are ultimate facts, they will, of course, refuse to resolve themselves into anything else, and to define them in words must be extremely difficult or impossible. The mind must be brought into direct contact with them in order to apprehend them; and it is only by relying upon its own inborn power, and refusing the guidance of the senses, that it can attain this end.

We have already ventured to express an opinion that those dialogues of Plato which seem to be entirely negative, and to conduct to no conclusion, are in reality positive in their aim, and lead to *that* conclusion which is the very centre of the Platonic system, viz. that ideas are the sole and ultimate realities. They seem to us designed to prepare the way for the doctrine which the later dialogues subsequently developed; and, on the other hand, the definitions which Plato himself gives of abstract terms—as that of Justice in the *Republic*—and which Mr. Grote truly says would never have held their ground against the battery of the Socratic dialectic—are hardly consistent with his own theory. The dialogues of search, according to this view, are simply attempts to separate the abstract idea from all connection with individual things, and set it forth as a self-existent entity. Both Socrates and those who converse with him have

some notion of what they are looking for, otherwise they could not look; but *they* fail to perceive the difference between the idea itself and its partial embodiments; while *he* knows that the bright object of his quest is distinct from all sensible and particular things. And now let us take just one example of the negative dialogues, and consider whether it will bear this interpretation. Take the *Hippias Major*, than which there is no better illustration of our meaning. The question here is about the beautiful, or, if we would retain the comprehensive meaning of the Greek word, the fair, and the discussion is carried on with Hippias, a Sophist, who is introduced as expressing the utmost confidence that he can answer all the difficulties of Socrates. In the course of the conversation, Hippias offers three several definitions of the beautiful, all of which he is compelled to abandon by the questions of his opponent. These definitions are so remote from the point that they have been regarded as utterly unworthy of a man who was reputed wise in his own age, and as, therefore, very far from truth and probability. Of course it is impossible to say whether they are such definitions as the real Hippias would have given, but their fault is only this, that they confound the idea with the object in which it resides, or, as it may be expressed, the common attribute with the particular thing to which it belongs, and such a mistake was not ridiculous when Plato wrote. In fact, Socrates has the utmost difficulty in making Hippias understand the nature of the question. Having brought him to admit that there is such a thing as justice distinct from the just man, he tries to convince him that, in the same way, there must be a beauty distinct from the things that are beautiful. No sooner, however, is the question put—What is the beautiful?—than Hippias forgets the lesson, and gives as his definition, “a beautiful maiden.” Socrates speedily convinces him that a maiden cannot be possessed of absolute beauty, because, though much more beautiful than an ape, she is not beautiful as compared with the gods, and explains that what he is looking for is that by the possession of which other things, as well as the beautiful maiden herself, are beautiful. Hippias, however, is still so far from the apprehension of a universal idea that he now replies that gold is the thing by which all things else are made beautiful. Socrates, in reply, shows that there are other things besides gold which impart beauty, and that gold itself is not always beautiful—namely, when it is not becoming: for example, a ladle of fig-tree wood is more becoming and therefore more beautiful than one of gold. Driven from this position, the Sophist at length appears for a moment to have a glimmering of the real object of search, and asks, is it not something which will appear beautiful at all times and in all places? His next answer, however, shows that he is still in the dark. “It is,” he says, “always and everywhere the most beautiful thing for a man after a happy life, and having laid his parents in the grave, to be himself splendidly buried by his children.” But this does not apply to gods and heroes, and is, therefore, as futile as the rest. Socrates, accordingly, now takes his turn, and proposes several definitions of the beautiful—it is the

becoming, the useful, the pleasurable, which are, one after the other, eagerly welcomed by Hippias, and then, after examination, rejected both by him and by Socrates, and the dialogue ends with a speech from the latter, pointing out the folly of attempting to judge what is beautiful and what is not, so long as one does not know what is beauty itself.

Here the purpose of Plato seems to be quite unmistakable. There can hardly be a doubt that the result aimed at is the conviction that beauty is a thing by itself, altogether distinct from the objects in which it resides, and that there is no other quality into which it can be resolved. And the same purpose, applied to other general ideas, run through other dialogues. It is unnecessary to illustrate the subject at greater length, but any one who will read the most negative and the most apparently unsatisfactory of Plato's dialogues, will hardly fail to perceive that they all tend to the same conclusion—to the separation, namely, of the general idea, whatever it may be—temperance, or holiness, or law—from the particular persons or things which partake of its essence.

Enough has been said now to render Plato's doctrine of ideas intelligible to our non-Platonic readers, and it is only for such we write. Whether the doctrine is entirely absurd, or contains some grain of truth, is a question which the reader will probably be able to answer for himself, and to which we need not devote much space. In some respects the doctrine that abstract ideas are real entities, is highly absurd. There can be no doubt that the words animal, tree, man, &c. are simply names carried about in the memory, to be applied to all those several objects which resemble one another in such particulars as are included in the definition, and it is difficult to understand how any one could ever have maintained the contrary. There can be no doubt that justice is also a word applicable to certain understood relations and actions of intelligent beings, and that there is no such entity as justice, apart from intelligent beings and their doings. In this respect Plato was certainly misled by words. But in one respect his doctrine was not absurd. What he intended to teach was, that justice and truth, and other such abstractions, are not mere matters of human opinion, dependent upon the customs of different countries, and changing with the revolutions of time; but that there is an absolute standard somewhere, known indeed only to the wise, but by them capable of being so applied as to enable them to form a judgment in all particular cases. And every one feels that this is so. Every one feels that though all men were to act unjustly, this would not destroy justice itself, or make injustice right; that though all men were agreed in a lie, this would not alter the nature of truth. And this, doubtless, is the grain of truth which lies, almost drowned in splendour, beneath the gorgeous imagery of the *Phædrus* and the gentle beauty of the *Phædo*, and which is the purpose indirectly aimed at even in the apparently negative discussions.

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THE MOTH AND THE CANDLE.

Armadale.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAPTER V.

PEDGIFT'S REMEDY.



AFTER waiting to hold a preliminary consultation with his son, Mr. Pedgift the elder set forth alone for his interview with Allan at the great house.

Allowing for the difference in their ages, the son was, in this instance, so accurately the reflection of the father, that an acquaintance with either of the two Pedgifts was almost equivalent to an acquaintance with both. Add some little height and size to the figure of Pedgift Junior; give some additional breadth and boldness to his humour, and some additional solidity and composure to his confidence in himself—and the presence and character of Pedgift Senior stood for all general purposes revealed before you.

The lawyer's conveyance to Thorpe-Ambrose was his own smart gig, drawn by his famous fast-trotting mare. It was his habit to drive himself; and it was one among the trifling external peculiarities in which he and his son differed a little, to affect something of a sporting character in his dress. The drab trousers of Pedgift the elder fitted close to his legs; his boots in dry weather and wet alike, were equally thick in the sole; his coat pockets overlapped his hips, and his favourite summer cravat was of light spotted muslin, tied in the neatest and smallest of bows. He used tobacco like his son, but in a different form. While the younger man smoked, the elder took snuff copiously; and it was noticed among his intimates that he always held his "pinch" in a state of suspense between his box and

his nose, when he was going to clinch a good bargain, or to say a good thing. The art of diplomacy enters largely into the practice of all successful men in the lower branch of the law. Mr. Pedgift's form of diplomatic practice had been the same throughout his life, on every occasion when he found his arts of persuasion required at an interview with another man. He invariably kept his strongest argument, or his boldest proposal, to the last, and invariably remembered it at the door (after previously taking his leave), as if it was a purely accidental consideration which had that instant occurred to him. Jocular friends, acquainted by previous experience with this form of proceeding, had given it the name of "Pedgift's postscript." There were few people in Thorpe-Ambrose who did not know what it meant, when the lawyer suddenly checked his exit at the opened door; came back softly to his chair, with his pinch of snuff suspended between his box and his nose; said, "By-the-by, there's a point occurs to me;" and settled the question off-hand, after having given it up in despair not a minute before.

This was the man whom the march of events at Thorpe-Ambrose had now thrust capriciously into a foremost place. This was the one friend at hand to whom Allan in his social isolation could turn for counsel in the hour of need.

"Good evening, Mr. Armadale. Many thanks for your prompt attention to my very disagreeable letter," said Pedgift Senior, opening the conversation cheerfully the moment he entered his client's house. "I hope you understand, sir, that I had really no choice under the circumstances, but to write as I did?"

"I have very few friends, Mr. Pedgift," returned Allan simply. "And I am sure you are one of the few."

"Much obliged, Mr. Armadale. I have always tried to deserve your good opinion, and I mean, if I can, to deserve it now. You found yourself comfortable I hope, sir, at the hotel in London? We call it Our hotel. Some rare old wine in the cellar, which I should have introduced to your notice if I had had the honour of being with you. My son unfortunately knows nothing about wine."

Allan felt his false position in the neighbourhood far too acutely to be capable of talking of anything but the main business of the evening. His lawyer's politely roundabout method of approaching the painful subject to be discussed between them, rather irritated than composed him. He came at once to the point, in his own bluntly straightforward way.

"The hotel was very comfortable, Mr. Pedgift, and your son was very kind to me. But we are not in London now; and I want to talk to you about how I am to meet the lies that are being told of me in this place. Only point me out any one man," cried Allan with a rising voice and a mounting colour,—“any one man who says I am afraid to show my face in the neighbourhood; and I'll horsewhip him publicly before another day is over his head!”

Pedgift Senior helped himself to a pinch of snuff, and held it calmly in suspense midway between his box and his nose.

"You can horsewhip a man, sir; but you can't horsewhip a neighbourhood," said the lawyer in his politely epigrammatic manner. "We will fight our battle, if you please, without borrowing our weapons of the coachman yet awhile, at any rate."

"But how are we to begin?" asked Allan impatiently. "How am I to contradict the infamous things they say of me?"

"There are two ways of stepping out of your present awkward position, sir—a short way, and a long way," replied Pedgift Senior. "The short way (which is always the best) has occurred to me since I have heard of your proceedings in London from my son. I understand that you permitted him, after you received my letter, to take me into your confidence. I have drawn various conclusions from what he has told me, which I may find it necessary to trouble you with presently. In the meantime I should be glad to know under what circumstances you went to London to make these unfortunate inquiries about Miss Gwilt? Was it your own notion to pay that visit to Mrs. Mandeville? or were you acting under the influence of some other person?"

Allan hesitated. "I can't honestly tell you it was my own notion," he replied—and said no more.

"I thought as much!" remarked Pedgift Senior in high triumph. "The short way out of our present difficulty, Mr. Armadale, lies straight through that other person, under whose influence you acted. That other person must be presented forthwith to public notice, and must stand in that other person's proper place. The name if you please, sir, to begin with—we'll come to the circumstances directly."

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Pedgift, that we must try the longest way, if you have no objection," replied Allan quietly. "The short way happens to be a way I can't take on this occasion."

The men who rise in the law are the men who decline to take No for an answer. Mr. Pedgift the elder had risen in the law; and Mr. Pedgift the elder now declined to take No for an answer. But all pertinacity—even professional pertinacity included—sooner or later finds its limits; and the lawyer, doubly fortified as he was by long experience and copious pinches of snuff, found his limits at the very outset of the interview. It was impossible that Allan could respect the confidence which Mrs. Milroy had treacherously affected to place in him. But he had an honest man's regard for his own pledged word—the regard which looks straightforward at the fact, and which never glances sidelong at the circumstances—and the utmost persistency of Pedgift Senior failed to move him a hair's-breadth from the position which he had taken up. "No" is the strongest word in the English language, in the mouth of any man who has the courage to repeat it often enough—and Allan had the courage to repeat it often enough on this occasion.

"Very good, sir," said the lawyer, accepting his defeat without the

slightest loss of temper. "The choice rests with you, and you have chosen. We will go the long way. It starts (allow me to inform you) from my office; and it leads (as I strongly suspect) through a very miry road to—Miss Gwilt."

Allan looked at his legal adviser in speechless astonishment.

"If you won't expose the person who is responsible, in the first instance, sir, for the inquiries to which you unfortunately lent yourself," proceeded Mr. Pedgiff the elder, "the only other alternative, in your present position, is to justify the inquiries themselves."

"And how is that to be done?" inquired Allan.

"By proving to the whole neighbourhood, Mr. Armadale, what I firmly believe to be the truth—that the pet object of the public protection is an adventuress of the worst class; an undeniably worthless and dangerous woman. In plainer English still, sir, by employing time enough and money enough to discover the truth about Miss Gwilt."

Before Allan could say a word in answer, there was an interruption at the door. After the usual preliminary knock, one of the servants came in.

"I told you I was not to be interrupted," said Allan irritably. "Good heavens! am I never to have done with them? another letter!"

"Yes, sir," said the man, holding it out. "And," he added, speaking words of evil omen in his master's ears, "the person waits for an answer."

Allan looked at the address of the letter with a natural expectation of encountering the handwriting of the major's wife. The anticipation was not realized. His correspondent was plainly a lady, but the lady was not Mrs. Milroy.

"Who can it be?" he said, looking mechanically at Pedgiff Senior as he opened the envelope.

Pedgiff Senior gently tapped his snuff-box, and said without a moment's hesitation—"Miss Gwilt."

Allan opened the letter. The first two words in it were the echo of the two words the lawyer had just pronounced. It *was* Miss Gwilt!

Once more, Allan looked at his legal adviser in speechless astonishment.

"I have known a good many of them in my time, sir," explained Pedgiff Senior, with a modesty equally rare and becoming in a man of his age. "Not as handsome as Miss Gwilt, I admit. But quite as bad, I dare say. Read your letter, Mr. Armadale—read your letter."

Allan read these lines:—

"Miss Gwilt presents her compliments to Mr. Armadale, and begs to know if it will be convenient to him to favour her with an interview, either this evening or to-morrow morning. Miss Gwilt offers no apology for making her present request. She believes Mr. Armadale will grant it as an act of justice towards a friendless woman whom he has been innocently the means of injuring, and who is earnestly desirous to set herself right in his estimation."

Allan handed the letter to his lawyer in silent perplexity and distress.

The face of Mr. Pedgift the elder expressed but one feeling when he had read the letter in his turn and had handed it back—a feeling of profound admiration. “What a lawyer she would have made,” he exclaimed, fervently, “if she had only been a man!”

“I can’t treat this as lightly as you do, Mr. Pedgift,” said Allan. “It’s dreadfully distressing to me. I was so fond of her,” he added, in a lower tone,—“I was so fond of her once.”

Mr. Pedgift Senior suddenly became serious on his side.

“Do you mean to say, sir, that you actually contemplate seeing Miss Gwilt?” he asked, with an expression of genuine dismay.

“I can’t treat her cruelly,” returned Allan. “I have been the means of injuring her—without intending it, God knows!—I can’t treat her cruelly after that!”

“Mr. Armadale,” said the lawyer, “you did me the honour, a little while since, to say that you considered me your friend. May I presume on that position to ask you a question or two, before you go straight to your own ruin?”

“Any questions you like,” said Allan, looking back at the letter—the only letter he had ever received from Miss Gwilt.

“You have had one trap set for you already, sir, and you have fallen into it. Do you want to fall into another?”

“You know the answer to that question, Mr. Pedgift, as well as I do.”

“I’ll try again, Mr. Armadale; we lawyers are not easily discouraged. Do you think that any statement Miss Gwilt might make to you, if you do see her, would be a statement to be relied on, after what you and my son discovered in London?”

“She might explain what we discovered in London,” suggested Allan, still looking at the writing, and thinking of the hand that had traced it.

“*Might* explain it? My dear sir, she is quite certain to explain it! I will do her justice: I believe she would make out a case without a single flaw in it from beginning to end.”

That last answer forced Allan’s attention away from the letter. The lawyer’s pitiless common sense showed him no mercy.

“If you see that woman again, sir,” proceeded Pedgift Senior, “you will commit the rashest act of folly I ever heard of in all my experience. She can have but one object in coming here—to practise on your weakness for her. Nobody can say into what false step she may not lead you, if you once give her the opportunity. You admit yourself that you have been fond of her—your attentions to her have been the subject of general remark—if you haven’t actually offered her the chance of becoming Mrs. Armadale, you have done the next thing to it—and knowing all this, you propose to see her and to let her work on you with her devilish beauty and her devilish cleverness, in the character of your interesting victim! You, who are one of the best matches in England! You who are the natural prey of all the hungry single women in the community

I never heard the like of it; I never, in all my professional experience, heard the like of it! If you must positively put yourself in a dangerous position, Mr. Armadale," concluded Pedgift the elder, with the everlasting pinch of snuff held in suspense between his box and his nose, "there's a wild-beast show coming to our town next week. Let in the tigress, sir, —don't let in Miss Gwilt!"

For the third time Allan looked at his lawyer. And for the third time his lawyer looked back at him quite unabashed.

"You seem to have a very bad opinion of Miss Gwilt," said Allan.

"The worst possible opinion, Mr. Armadale," retorted Pedgift Senior, coolly. "We will return to that, when we have sent the lady's messenger about his business. Will you take my advice? Will you decline to see her?"

"I would willingly decline—it would be so dreadfully distressing to both of us," said Allan. "I would willingly decline, if I only knew how."

"Bless my soul, Mr. Armadale, it's easy enough! Don't commit yourself in writing. Send out to the messenger, and say there's no answer."

The short course thus suggested, was a course which Allan positively declined to take. "It's treating her brutally," he said; "I can't and won't do it."

Once more, the pertinacity of Pedgift the elder found its limits—and once more that wise man yielded gracefully to a compromise. On receiving his client's promise not to see Miss Gwilt, he consented to Allan's committing himself in writing—under his lawyer's dictation. The letter thus produced was modelled on Allan's own style; it began and ended in one sentence. "Mr. Armadale presents his compliments to Miss Gwilt and regrets that he cannot have the pleasure of seeing her at Thorpe-Ambrose." Allan had pleaded hard for a second sentence, explaining that he only declined Miss Gwilt's request from a conviction that an interview would be needlessly distressing on both sides. But his legal adviser firmly rejected the proposed addition to the letter. "When you say No to a woman, sir," remarked Pedgift Senior, "always say it in one word. If you give her your reasons, she invariably believes that you mean Yes."

Producing that little gem of wisdom from the rich mine of his professional experience, Mr. Pedgift the elder sent out the answer to Miss Gwilt's messenger, and recommended the servant to "see the fellow, whoever he was, well clear of the house."

"Now, sir," said the lawyer, "we will come back, if you like, to my opinion of Miss Gwilt. It doesn't at all agree with yours, I'm afraid. You think her an object for pity—quite natural at your age. I think her an object for the inside of a prison—quite natural at mine. You shall hear the grounds on which I have formed my opinion directly. Let me show you that I am in earnest by putting the opinion itself, in the

first place, to a practical test. Do you think Miss Gwilt is likely to persist in paying you a visit, Mr. Armadale, after the answer you have just sent to her?"

"Quite impossible!" cried Allan, warmly. "Miss Gwilt is a lady; after the letter I have sent to her, she will never come near me again."

"There we join issue, sir," cried Pedgitt Senior. "I say she will snap her fingers at your letter (which was one of the reasons why I objected to your writing it). I say, she is in all probability waiting her messenger's return, in or near your grounds at this moment. I say, she will try to force her way in here, before four-and-twenty hours more are over your head. Egad, sir!" cried Mr. Pedgitt, looking at his watch, "it's only seven o'clock now. She's bold enough and clever enough to catch you unawares this very evening. Permit me to ring for the servant—permit me to request that you will give him orders immediately to say you are not at home. You needn't hesitate, Mr. Armadale! If you're right about Miss Gwilt, it's a mere formality. If I'm right, it's a wise precaution. Back your opinion, sir," said Mr. Pedgitt, ringing the bell, "I back mine!"

Allan was sufficiently nettled when the bell rang, to feel ready to give the order. But when the servant came in, past remembrances got the better of him, and the words stuck in his throat. "You give the order," he said to Mr. Pedgitt—and walked away abruptly to the window. "You're a good fellow!" thought the old lawyer, looking after him, and penetrating his motive on the instant. "The claws of that she-devil shan't scratch you if I can help it."

The servant waited inexorably for his orders.

"If Miss Gwilt calls here, either this evening, or at any other time," said Pedgitt Senior, "Mr. Armadale is not at home. Wait! If she asks when Mr. Armadale will be back, you don't know. Wait! If she proposes coming in and sitting down, you have a general order that nobody is to come in and sit down, unless they have a previous appointment with Mr. Armadale. Come!" cried old Pedgitt, rubbing his hands cheerfully when the servant had left the room, "I've stopped her out now, at any rate! The orders are all given, Mr. Armadale. We may go on with our conversation."

Allan came back from the window. "The conversation is not a very pleasant one," he said. "No offence to you, but I wish it was over."

"We will get it over as soon as possible, sir," said Pedgitt Senior, still persisting as only lawyers and women *can* persist, in forcing his way little by little nearer and nearer to his own object. "Let us go back, if you please, to the practical suggestion which I offered to you when the servant came in with Miss Gwilt's note. There is, I repeat, only one way left for you, Mr. Armadale, out of your present awkward position. You must pursue your inquiries about this woman to an end—on the chance (which I consider next to a certainty) that the end will justify you in the estimation of the neighbourhood."

"I wish to God I had never made any inquiries at all!" said Allan. "Nothing will induce me, Mr. Pedgift, to make any more."

"Why?" asked the lawyer.

"Can you ask me why," retorted Allan, hotly, "after your son has told you what we found out in London? Even if I had less cause to be—to be sorry for Miss Gwilt than I have; even if it was some other woman, do you think I would inquire any further into the secret of a poor betrayed creature—much less expose it to the neighbourhood? I should think myself as great a scoundrel as the man who has cast her out helpless on the world, if I did anything of the kind. I wonder you can ask me the question—upon my soul, I wonder you can ask me the question!"

"Give me your hand, Mr. Armadale!" cried Pedgift Senior, warmly; "I honour you for being so angry with me. The neighbourhood may say what it pleases; you're a gentleman, sir, in the best sense of the word. Now," pursued the lawyer, dropping Allan's hand, and lapsing back instantly from sentiment to business, "just hear what I have got to say in my own defence. Suppose Miss Gwilt's real position happens to be nothing like what you are generously determined to believe it to be?"

"We have no reason to suppose that," said Allan resolutely.

"Such is your opinion, sir," persisted Pedgift. "Mine, founded on what is publicly known of Miss Gwilt's proceedings—here, and on what I have seen of Miss Gwilt herself, is that she is as far as I am from being the sentimental victim you are inclined to make her out. Gently, Mr. Armadale! remember that I have put my opinion to a practical test, and wait to condemn it off-hand until events have justified you. Let me put my points, sir,—make allowances for me as a lawyer—and let me put my points. You and my son are young men; and I don't deny that the circumstances, on the surface, appear to justify the interpretation which, as young men, you have placed on them. I am an old man—I know that circumstances are not always to be taken as they appear on the surface—and I possess the great advantage, in the present case, of having had years of professional experience among some of the wickedest women who ever walked this earth."

Allan opened his lips to protest, and checked himself, in despair of producing the slightest effect. Pedgift Senior bowed in polite acknowledgment of his client's self-restraint, and took instant advantage of it to go on.

"All Miss Gwilt's proceedings," he resumed, "since your unfortunate correspondence with the major, show me that she is an old hand at deceit. The moment she is threatened with exposure—exposure of some kind, there can be no doubt, after what you discovered in London—she turns your honourable silence to the best possible account, and leaves the major's service in the character of a martyr. Once out of the house, what does she do next? She boldly stops in the neighbourhood, and serves three excellent purposes by doing so. In the first place, she shows every-

body that she is not afraid of facing another attack on her reputation. In the second place, she is close at hand to twist you round her little finger, and to become Mrs. Armadale in spite of circumstances, if you (and I) allow her the opportunity. In the third place, if you (and I) are wise enough to distrust her, she is equally wise on her side, and doesn't give us the first great chance of following her to London, and associating her with her accomplices. Is this the conduct of an unhappy woman who has lost her character in a moment of weakness, and who has been driven unwillingly into a deception to get it back again?"

"You put it cleverly," said Allan, answering with marked reluctance; "I can't deny that you put it cleverly."

"Your own common sense, Mr. Armadale, is beginning to tell you that I put it justly," said Pedgift Senior. "I don't presume to say yet what this woman's connection may be with those people at Pimlico. All I assert is, that it is not the connection you suppose. Having stated the facts so far, I have only to add my own personal impression of Miss Gwilt. I won't shock you, if I can help it—I'll try if I can't put it cleverly again. She came to my office (as I told you in my letter), no doubt to make friends with your lawyer, if she could—she came to tell me in the most forgiving and Christian manner, that she didn't blame *you*."

"Do you ever believe in anybody, Mr. Pedgift?" interposed Allan.

"Sometimes, Mr. Armadale," returned Pedgift the elder, as unabashed as ever. "I believe as often as a lawyer can. To proceed, sir. When I was in the criminal branch of practice, it fell to my lot to take instructions for the defence of women committed for trial, from the women's own lips. Whatever other difference there might be among them, I got, in time, to notice, among those who were particularly wicked and unquestionably guilty, one point in which they all resembled each other. Tall and short, old and young, handsome and ugly, they all had a secret self-possession that nothing could shake. On the surface they were as different as possible. Some of them were in a state of indignation; some of them were drowned in tears; some of them were full of pious confidence; and some of them were resolved to commit suicide before the night was out. But only put your finger suddenly on the weak point in the story told by any one of them, and there was an end of her rage, or her tears, or her piety, or her despair—and out came the genuine woman, in full possession of all her resources, with a neat little lie that exactly suited the circumstances of the case. Miss Gwilt was in tears, sir,—becoming tears that didn't make her nose red,—and I put my finger suddenly on the weak point in *her* story. Down dropped her pathetic pocket-handkerchief from her beautiful blue eyes, and out came the genuine woman with the neat little lie that exactly suited the circumstances! I felt twenty years younger, Mr. Armadale, on the spot. I declare I thought I was in Newgate again, with my note-book in my hand, taking my instructions for the defence!"

"The next thing, you'll say, Mr. Pedgift," cried Allan, angrily, "is that Miss Gwilt has been in prison!"

Pedgift Senior calmly rapped his snuff-box, and had his answer ready at a moment's notice.

"She may have richly deserved to see the inside of a prison, Mr. Armadale; but, in the age we live in, that is one excellent reason for her never having been near any place of the kind. A prison, in the present tender state of public feeling, for a charming woman like Miss Gwilt! My dear sir, if she had attempted to murder you or me, and if an inhuman judge and jury had decided on sending her to a prison, the first object of modern society would be to prevent her going into it; and, if that couldn't be done, the next object would be to let her out again as soon as possible. Read your newspaper, Mr. Armadale, and you'll find we live in piping times for the black sheep of the community—if they are only black enough. I insist on asserting, sir, that we have got one of the blackest of the lot to deal with in this case. I insist on asserting that you have had the rare luck, in these unfortunate inquiries, to pitch on a woman who happens to be a fit object for inquiry, in the interests of the public protection. Differ with me as strongly as you please—but don't make up your mind finally about Miss Gwilt, until events have put those two opposite opinions of ours to the test that I have proposed. A fairer test there can't be. I agree with you, that no lady worthy of the name could attempt to force her way in here, after receiving your letter. But I deny that Miss Gwilt is worthy of the name; and I say she will try to force her way in here in spite of you."

"And I say she won't!" retorted Allan, firmly.

Pedgift Senior leaned back in his chair and smiled. There was a momentary silence—and in that silence, the door-bell rang.

The lawyer and the client both looked expectantly in the direction of the hall.

"No!" cried Allan, more angrily than ever.

"Yes!" said Pedgift Senior, contradicting him with the utmost politeness.

They waited the event. The opening of the house-door was audible, but the room was too far from it for the sound of voices to reach the ear as well. After a long interval of expectation, the closing of the door was heard at last. Allan rose impetuously, and rang the bell. Mr. Pedgift the elder sat sublimely calm, and enjoyed, with a gentle zest, the largest pinch of snuff he had taken yet.

"Anybody for me?" asked Allan, when the servant came in.

The man looked at Pedgift Senior, with an expression of unutterable reverence, and answered—"Miss Gwilt."

"I don't want to crow over you, sir," said Mr. Pedgift the elder, when the servant had withdrawn. "But what do you think of Miss Gwilt now?"

Allan shook his head in silent discouragement and distress.

"Time is of some importance, Mr. Armadale. After what has just happened, do you still object to taking the course I have had the honour of suggesting to you?"

"I can't, Mr. Pedgift," said Allan. "I can't be the means of disgracing her in the neighbourhood. I would rather be disgraced myself—as I am."

"Let me put it in another way, sir. Excuse my persisting. You have been very kind to me and my family; and I have a personal interest, as well as a professional interest in you. If you can't prevail on yourself to show this woman's character in its true light, will you take common precautions to prevent her doing any more harm? Will you consent to having her privately watched, as long as she remains in this neighbourhood?"

For the second time, Allan shook his head.

"Is that your final resolution, sir?"

"It is, Mr. Pedgift; but I am much obliged to you for your advice, all the same."

Pedgift Senior rose in a state of gentle resignation, and took up his hat. "Good evening, sir," he said, and made sorrowfully for the door. Allan rose on his side, innocently supposing that the interview was at an end. Persons better acquainted with the diplomatic habits of his legal adviser, would have recommended him to keep his seat. The time was ripe for "Pedgift's postscript," and the lawyer's indicative snuff-box was at that moment in one of his hands, as he opened the door with the other.

"Good evening," said Allan.

Pedgift Senior opened the door—stopped—considered—closed the door again—came back mysteriously with his pinch of snuff in suspense between his box and his nose—and repeating his invariable formula, "By-the-by, there's a point occurs to me," quietly resumed possession of his empty chair.

Allan, wondering, took the seat, in his turn, which he had just left. Lawyer and client looked at each other once more, and the inexhaustible interview began again.

CHAPTER VI.

PEDGIFT'S POSTSCRIPT.

"I MENTIONED that a point had occurred to me, sir," remarked Pedgift Senior.

"You did," said Allan.

"Would you like to hear what it is, Mr. Armadale?"

"If you please," said Allan.

"With all my heart, sir! This is the point. I attach considerable importance—if nothing else can be done—to having Miss Gwilt privately looked after, as long as she stops at Thorpe-Ambrose. It struck me just now at the door, Mr. Armadale, that what you are not willing to do for your own security, you might be willing to do for the security of another person."

"What other person?" inquired Allan.

"A young lady who is a near neighbour of yours, sir. Shall I mention the name, in confidence? Miss Milroy."

Allan started, and changed colour.

"Miss Milroy!" he repeated. "Can *she* be concerned in this miserable business? I hope not, Mr. Pedgift; I sincerely hope not."

"I paid a visit, in your interests, sir, at the cottage, this morning," proceeded Pedgift Senior. "You shall hear what happened there, and judge for yourself. Major Milroy has been expressing his opinion of you pretty freely; and I thought it highly desirable to give him a caution. It's always the way with those quiet addle-headed men—when they do once wake up, there's no reasoning with their obstinacy, and no quieting their violence. Well, sir, this morning I went to the cottage. The major and Miss Neelie were both in the parlour—miss not looking so pretty as usual; pale, I thought, pale, and worn, and anxious. Up jumps the addle-headed major (I wouldn't give *that*, Mr. Armadale, for the brains of a man who can occupy himself for half his lifetime in making a clock!)—up jumps the addle-headed major, in the loftiest manner, and actually tries to look me down. Ha! ha! the idea of anybody looking *me* down, at my time of life. I behaved like a Christian; I nodded kindly to old What's-o'clock. 'Fine morning, major,' says I. 'Have you any business with me?' says he. 'Just a word,' says I. Miss Neelie, like the sensible girl she is, gets up to leave the room; and what does her ridiculous father do? He stops her. 'You needn't go, my dear; I have nothing to say to Mr. Pedgift,' says this old military idiot, and turns my way, and tries to look me down again. 'You are Mr. Armadale's lawyer,' says he; 'if you come on any business relating to Mr. Armadale, I refer you to my solicitor.' (His solicitor is Darch; and Darch has had enough of *me* in business, I can tell you!) 'My errand here, major, does certainly relate to Mr. Armadale,' says I; 'but it doesn't concern your lawyer—at any rate, just yet. I wish to caution you to suspend your opinion of my client, or, if you won't do that, to be careful how you express it in public. I warn you that our turn is to come, and that you are not at the end yet of this scandal about Miss Gwilt.' It struck me as likely that he would lose his temper when he found himself tackled in that way, and he amply fulfilled my expectations. He was quite violent in his language—the poor weak creature—actually violent with *me*! I behaved like a Christian again; I nodded kindly, and wished him good morning. When I looked round to wish Miss Neelie good morning too, she was gone. You seem restless, Mr. Armadale," remarked Pedgift Senior, as Allan, feeling the sting of old recollections, suddenly started out of his chair, and began pacing up and down the room. "I won't try your patience much longer, sir; I am coming to the point."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Pedgift," said Allan, returning to his seat, and trying to look composedly at the lawyer through the intervening image of Neelie which the lawyer had called up.

"Well, sir, I left the cottage," resumed Pedgift Senior. "Just as I turned the corner from the garden into the park, who should I stumble on but Miss Neelie herself, evidently on the look-out for me. 'I want to speak to you for one moment, Mr. Pedgift!' says she. 'Does Mr. Armadale think *me* mixed up in this matter?' She was violently agitated—tears in her eyes, sir, of the sort which my legal experience has not accustomed me to see. I quite forgot myself; I actually gave her my arm, and led her away gently among the trees. (A nice position to find me in, if any of the scandal-mongers of the town had happened to be walking in that direction!) 'My dear Miss Milroy,' says I, 'why should Mr. Armadale think *you* mixed up in it?'"

"You ought to have told her at once that I thought nothing of the kind!" exclaimed Allan, indignantly. "Why did you leave her a moment in doubt about it?"

"Because I am a lawyer, Mr. Armadale," rejoined Pedgift Senior, drily. "Even in moments of sentiment, under convenient trees, with a pretty girl on my arm, I can't entirely divest myself of my professional caution. Don't look distressed, sir, pray! I set things right in due course of time. Before I left Miss Milroy, I told her, in the plainest terms, no such idea had ever entered your head."

"Did she seem relieved?" asked Allan.

"She was able to dispense with the use of my arm, sir," replied old Pedgift, as drily as ever, "and to pledge me to inviolable secrecy on the subject of our interview. She was particularly desirous that *you* should hear nothing about it. If you are at all anxious on your side, to know why I am now betraying her confidence, I beg to inform you that her confidence related to no less a person than the lady who favoured you with a call just now—Miss Gwilt."

Allan, who had been once more restlessly pacing the room, stopped, and returned to his chair.

"Is this serious?" he asked.

"Most serious, sir," returned Pedgift Senior. "I am betraying Miss Neelie's secret, in Miss Neelie's own interest. Let us go back to that cautious question I put to her. She found some little difficulty in answering it—for the reply involved her in a narrative of the parting interview between her governess and herself. This is the substance of it. The two were alone when Miss Gwilt took leave of her pupil; and the words she used (as reported to me by Miss Neelie) were these. She said, 'Your mother has declined to allow me to take leave of her. Do you decline too? Miss Neelie's answer was a remarkably sensible one for a girl of her age. 'We have not been good friends,' she said, 'and I believe we are equally glad to part with each other. But I have no wish to decline taking leave of you.' Saying that, she held out her hand. Miss Gwilt stood looking at her steadily, without taking it, and addressed her in these words:—'*You are not Mrs. Armadale yet.*' Gently, sir! Keep your temper. It's not at all wonderful that a woman conscious of having her

own mercenary designs on you, should attribute similar designs to a young lady who happens to be your near neighbour. Let me go on. Miss Neelie, by her own confession (and quite naturally, I think), was excessively indignant. She owns to having answered, 'You shameless creature, how dare you say that to me!' Miss Gwilt's rejoinder was rather a remarkable one—the anger, on her side, appears to have been of the cool, still, venomous kind. 'Nobody ever yet injured me, Miss Milroy,' she said, 'without sooner or later bitterly repenting it. You will bitterly repent it.' She stood looking at her pupil for a moment in dead silence, and then left the room. Miss Neelie appears to have felt the imputation fastened on her, in connection with you, far more sensitively than she felt the threat. She had previously known, as everybody had known in the house, that some unacknowledged proceedings of yours in London had led to Miss Gwilt's voluntary withdrawal from her situation. And she now inferred, from the language addressed to her, that she was actually believed by Miss Gwilt to have set those proceedings on foot, to advance herself, and to injure her governess, in your estimation. Gently, sir, gently! I haven't quite done yet. As soon as Miss Neelie had recovered herself, she went upstairs to speak to Mrs. Milroy. Miss Gwilt's abominable imputation had taken her by surprise; and she went to her mother first for enlightenment and advice. She got neither the one nor the other. Mrs. Milroy declared she was too ill to enter on the subject, and she has remained too ill to enter on it ever since. Miss Neelie applied next to her father. The major stopped her the moment your name passed her lips: he declared he would never hear you mentioned again by any member of his family. She has been left in the dark from that time to this—not knowing how she might have been misrepresented by Miss Gwilt, or what falsehoods you might have been led to believe of her. At my age and in my profession, I don't profess to have any extraordinary softness of heart. But I do think, Mr. Armadale, that Miss Neelie's position deserves our sympathy."

"I'll do anything to help her!" cried Allan, impulsively. "You don't know, Mr. Pedgift, what reason I have——" He checked himself, and confusedly repeated his first words. "I'll do anything," he reiterated earnestly—"anything in the world to help her!"

"Do you really mean that, Mr. Armadale? Excuse my asking—but you can very materially help Miss Neelie if you choose!"

"How?" asked Allan. "Only tell me how!"

"By giving me your authority, sir, to protect her from Miss Gwilt."

Having fired that shot point-blank at his client, the wise lawyer waited a little to let it take its effect before he said any more.

Allan's face clouded, and he shifted uneasily from side to side of his chair.

"Your son is hard enough to deal with, Mr. Pedgift," he said. "And you are harder than your son."

"Thank you, sir," rejoined the ready Pedgift, "in my son's name and

my own, for a handsome compliment to the firm. If you really wish to be of assistance to Miss Neelie," he went on more seriously, "I have shown you the way. You can do nothing to quiet her anxiety, which I have not done already. As soon as I had assured her that no misconception of her conduct existed in your mind, she went away satisfied. Her governess's parting threat doesn't seem to have dwelt on her memory. I can tell you, Mr. Armadale, it dwells on mine! You know my opinion of Miss Gwilt; and you know what Miss Gwilt herself has done this very evening, to justify that opinion even in your eyes. May I ask, after all that has passed, whether you think she is the sort of woman who can be trusted to confine herself to empty threats?"

The question was a formidable one to answer. Forced steadily back from the position which he had occupied at the outset of the interview, by the irresistible pressure of plain facts, Allan began for the first time to show symptoms of yielding on the subject of Miss Gwilt. "Is there no other way of protecting Miss Milroy but the way you have mentioned?" he asked uneasily.

"Do you think the major would listen to you, sir, if you spoke to him?" asked Pedgift Senior sarcastically; "I'm rather afraid he wouldn't honour *me* with his attention. Or perhaps you would prefer alarming Miss Neelie by telling her in plain words that we both think her in danger? Or, suppose you send me to Miss Gwilt, with instructions to inform her that she has done her pupil a cruel injustice? Women are so proverbially ready to listen to reason; and they are so universally disposed to alter their opinions of each other on application—especially when one woman thinks that another woman has destroyed her prospect of making a good marriage. Don't mind *me*, Mr. Armadale—I'm only a lawyer, and I can sit waterproof under another shower of Miss Gwilt's tears!"

"Damn it, Mr. Pedgift, tell me in plain words what you want to do!" cried Allan, losing his temper at last.

"In plain words, Mr. Armadale, I want to keep Miss Gwilt's proceedings privately under view, as long as she stops in this neighbourhood. I answer for finding a person who will look after her delicately and discreetly. And I agree to discontinue even this harmless superintendence of her actions, if there isn't good reason shown for continuing it, to your entire satisfaction, in a week's time. I make that moderate proposal, sir, in what I sincerely believe to be Miss Milroy's interest, and I wait your answer, Yes or No."

"Can't I have time to consider?" asked Allan, driven to the last helpless expedient of taking refuge in delay.

"Certainly, Mr. Armadale. But don't forget, while you are considering, that Miss Milroy is in the habit of walking out alone in your park, innocent of all apprehension of danger—and that Miss Gwilt is perfectly free to take any advantage of that circumstance that Miss Gwilt pleases."

"Do as you like!" exclaimed Allan in despair. "And, for God's sake, don't torment me any longer!"

Popular prejudice may deny it—but the profession of the law is a practically Christian profession in one respect at least. Of all the large collection of ready answers lying in wait for mankind on a lawyer's lips, none is kept in better working order than "the soft answer which turneth away wrath." Pedgift Senior rose with the alacrity of youth in his legs, and the wise moderation of age on his tongue. "Many thanks, sir," he said, "for the attention you have bestowed on me. I congratulate you on your decision, and I wish you good evening." This time, his indicative snuff-box was not in his hand, when he opened the door, and he actually disappeared, without coming back for a second postscript.

Allan's head sank on his breast, when he was left alone. "If it was only the end of the week!" he thought longingly. "If I only had Midwinter back again!"

As that aspiration escaped the client's lips, the lawyer got gaily into his gig. "Hie away, old girl!" cried Pedgift Senior, patting the fast-trotting mare with the end of his whip. "I never keep a lady waiting—and I've got business to-night with one of your own sex!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE MARTYRDOM OF MISS GWILT.

The outskirts of the little town of Thorpe-Ambrose, on the side nearest to "the great house," have earned some local celebrity as exhibiting the prettiest suburb of the kind to be found in East Norfolk. Here, the villas and gardens are for the most part built and laid out in excellent taste; the trees are in the prime of their growth; and the heathy common beyond the houses, rises and falls in picturesque and delightful variety of broken ground. The rank, fashion, and beauty of the town make this place their evening promenade; and when a stranger goes out for a drive, if he leaves it to the coachman, the coachman starts by way of the common as a matter of course.

On the opposite side, that is to say, on the side farthest from "the great house," the suburbs (in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-one) were universally regarded as a sore subject by all persons zealous for the reputation of the town.

Here, Nature was uninviting; man was poor; and social progress, as exhibited under the form of building, halted miserably. The streets dwindled feebly as they receded from the centre of the town, into smaller and smaller houses, and died away on the barren open ground into an atrophy of skeleton cottages. Builders hereabouts appeared to have universally abandoned their work in the first stage of its creation. Landholders set up poles on lost patches of ground; and, plaintively advertising that they were to let for building, raised sickly little crops meanwhile, in

despair of finding a purchaser to deal with them. All the waste paper of the town seemed to float congenially to this neglected spot ; and all the fretful children came and cried here, in charge of all the slatternly nurses who disgraced the place. If there was any intention in Thorpe-Ambrose of sending a worn-out horse to the knackers, that horse was sure to be found waiting his doom in a field on this side of the town. No growth flourished in these desert regions, but the arid growth of rubbish ; and no human creatures rejoiced but the creatures of the night—the vermin here and there in the beds, and the cats everywhere on the tiles.

The sun had set, and the summer twilight was darkening. The fretful children were crying in their cradles ; the horse destined for the knacker dozed forlorn in the field of his imprisonment ; the cats waited stealthily in corners for the coming night. But one living figure appeared in the lonely suburb—the figure of Mr. Bashwood. But one faint sound disturbed the dreadful silence—the sound of Mr. Bashwood's softly-stepping feet.

Moving slowly past the heaps of bricks rising at intervals along the road ; coasting carefully round the old iron, and the broken tiles scattered here and there in his path, Mr. Bashwood advanced from the direction of the country towards one of the unfinished streets of the suburb. His personal appearance had been apparently made the object of some special attention. His false teeth were brilliantly white ; his wig was carefully brushed ; his mourning garments, renewed throughout, gleamed with the hideous and slimy gloss of cheap black cloth. He moved with a nervous jauntiness, and looked about him with a vacant smile. Having reached the first of the skeleton cottages, his watery eyes settled steadily for the first time on the view of the street before him. The next instant he started ; his breath quickened ; he leaned trembling and flushing against the unfinished wall at his side. A lady, still at some distance, was advancing towards him down the length of the street. "She's coming !" he whispered, with a strange mixture of rapture and fear, of alternating colour and paleness, showing itself in his haggard face. "I wish I was the ground she treads on ! I wish I was the glove she's got on her hand !" He burst ecstasically into those extravagant words, with a concentrated intensity of delight in uttering them that actually shook his feeble figure from head to foot.

Smoothly and gracefully the lady glided nearer and nearer, until she revealed to Mr. Bashwood's eyes, what Mr. Bashwood's instincts had recognized in the first instance—the face of Miss Gwilt.

She was dressed with an exquisitely expressive economy of outlay. The plainest straw bonnet procurable, trimmed sparingly with the cheapest white ribbon, was on her head. Modest and tasteful poverty expressed itself in the speckless cleanliness and the modestly-proportioned skirts of her light "print" gown, and in the scanty little mantilla of cheap black silk which she wore over it, edged with a simple frilling of the same material. The lustre of her terrible red hair showed itself unshrinkingly

in a plaited coronet above her forehead, and escaped in one vagrant love-lock, perfectly curled, that dropped over her left shoulder. Her gloves, fitting her like a second skin, were of the sober brown hue which is slowest to show signs of use. One hand lifted her dress daintily above the impurities of the road ; the other held a little, nosegay of the commonest garden flowers. Noiselessly and smoothly she came on, with a gentle and regular undulation of the print gown ; with the lovelock softly lifted from moment to moment in the evening breeze ; with her head a little drooped, and her eyes on the ground—in walk, and look, and manner, in every casual movement that escaped her, expressing that subtle mixture of the voluptuous and the modest which, of the many attractive extremes that meet in women, is in a man's eyes the most irresistible of all.

"Mr. Bashwood!" she exclaimed, in loud clear tones indicative of the utmost astonishment, "what a surprise to find you here! I thought none but the wretched inhabitants ever ventured near this side of the town. Hush!" she added quickly in a whisper.—"You heard right, when you heard that Mr. Armadale was going to have me followed and watched. There's a man behind one of the houses. We must talk out loud of indifferent things, and look as if we had met by accident. Ask me what I am doing. Out loud! Directly! You shall never see me again, if you don't instantly leave off trembling, and do what I tell you!"

She spoke with a merciless tyranny of eye and voice—with a merciless use of her power over the feeble creature whom she addressed. Mr. Bashwood obeyed her in tones that quavered with agitation, and with eyes that devoured her beauty in a strange fascination of terror and delight.

"I am trying to earn a little money by teaching music," she said, in the voice intended to reach the spy's ears. "If you are able to recommend me any pupils, Mr. Bashwood, your good word will oblige me. Have you been in the grounds to-day?" she went on, dropping her voice again to a whisper. "Has Mr. Armadale been near the cottage? Has Miss Milroy been out of the garden? No? Are you sure? Look out for them to-morrow, and next day, and next day. They are certain to meet and make it up again, and I must and will know of it. Hush! Ask me my terms for teaching music. What are you frightened about? It's me the man's after—not you. Louder than when you asked me what I was doing, just now ; louder, or I won't trust you any more; I'll go to somebody else!"

Once more Mr. Bashwood obeyed. "Don't be angry with me," he murmured faintly, when he had spoken the necessary words. "My heart beats so—you'll kill me!"

"You poor old dear!" she whispered back, with a sudden change in her manner—with an easy satirical tenderness. "What business have you with a heart at your age? Be here to-morrow at the same time, and tell me what you have seen in the grounds. My terms are only five shillings a lesson," she went on, in her louder tone; "I'm sure that's not much,

Mr. Bashwood,—I give such long lessons, and I get all my pupils' music half-price." She suddenly dropped her voice again, and looked him brightly into instant subjection. "Don't let Mr. Armadale out of your sight to-morrow! If that girl manages to speak to him, and if I don't hear of it, I'll frighten you to death. If I *do* hear of it, I'll kiss you! Hush! Wish me good-night, and go on to the town, and leave me to go the other way. I don't want you—I'm not afraid of the man behind the houses; I can deal with him by myself. Say good-night, and I'll let you shake hands. Say it louder, and I'll give you one of my flowers, if you'll promise not to fall in love with it." She raised her voice again. "Good-night, Mr. Bashwood! Don't forget my terms. Five shillings a lesson, and the lessons last an hour at a time, and I get all my pupils' music half-price, which is an immense advantage, isn't it?" She slipped a flower into his hand—frowned him into obedience, and smiled to reward him for obeying, at the same moment—lifted her dress again above the impurities of the road—and went on her way with a dainty and indolent deliberation, as a cat goes on her way when she has exhausted the enjoyment of frightening a mouse.

Left alone, Mr. Bashwood turned to the low cottage wall near which he had been standing, and, resting himself on it wearily, looked at the flower in his hand. His past existence had disciplined him to bear disaster and insult, as few happier men could have borne them—but it had not prepared him to feel the master-passion of humanity, for the first time, at the dreary end of his life, in the hopeless decay of a manhood that had withered under the double blight of conjugal disappointment and parental sorrow. "Oh, if I was only young again!" murmured the poor wretch, resting his arms on the wall, and touching the flower with his dry fevered lips, in a stealthy rapture of tenderness. "She might have liked me when I was twenty!" He suddenly started back into an erect position, and stared about him in vacant bewilderment and terror. "She told me to go home," he said, with a startled look. "Why am I stopping here?" He turned, and hurried on to the town—in such dread of her anger, if she looked round and saw him, that he never so much as ventured on a backward glance at the road by which she had retired, and never detected the spy dogging her footsteps, under cover of the empty houses and the brick-heaps by the road-side.

Smoothly and gracefully, carefully preserving the speckless integrity of her dress, never hastening her pace, and never looking aside to the right hand or the left, Miss Gwilt pursued her way towards the open country. The suburban road branched off at its end in two directions. On the left, the path wound through a ragged little coppice, to the grazing grounds of a neighbouring farm. On the right, it led across a hillock of waste land to the high road. Stopping a moment to consider, but not showing the spy that she suspected him, by glancing behind her, while there was a hiding-place within his reach, Miss Gwilt took the path across the hillock. "I'll catch him there," she said to herself, looking up quietly

at the long straight line of the empty high road. Once on the ground that she had chosen for her purpose, she met the difficulties of the position with perfect tact and self-possession. After walking some thirty yards along the road, she let her nosegay drop—half turned round, in stooping to pick it up—saw the man stopping at the same moment behind her—and instantly went on again, quickening her pace, little by little, until she was walking at the top of her speed. The spy fell into the snare laid for him. Seeing the night coming, and fearing that he might lose sight of her in the darkness, he rapidly lessened the distance between them. Miss Gwilt went on faster and faster, till she plainly heard his footsteps behind her—then stopped—turned—and met the man face to face the next moment.

"My compliments to Mr. Armadale," she said, "and tell him I've caught you watching me."

"I'm not watching you, miss," retorted the spy, thrown off his guard by the daring plainness of the language in which she had spoken to him.

Miss Gwilt's eyes measured him contemptuously from head to foot. He was a weakly, undersized man. She was the taller, and (quite possibly) the stronger of the two.

"Take your hat off, you blackguard, when you speak to a lady," she said—and tossed his hat in an instant across a ditch by which they were standing, into a pool on the other side.

This time the spy was on his guard. He knew, as well as Miss Gwilt knew, the use which might be made of the precious minutes, if he turned his back on her, and crossed the ditch to recover his hat. "It's well for you you're a woman," he said, standing scowling at her bareheaded in the fast-darkening light.

Miss Gwilt glanced sidelong down the onward vista of the road, and saw, through the gathering obscurity, the solitary figure of a man, rapidly advancing towards her. Some women would have noticed the approach of a stranger at that hour and in that lonely place with a certain anxiety. Miss Gwilt was too confident in her own powers of persuasion not to count on the man's assistance beforehand, whoever he might be, *because* he was a man. She looked back at the spy with redoubled confidence in herself, and measured him contemptuously from head to foot for the second time.

"I wonder whether I'm strong enough to throw you after your hat?" she said. "I'll take a turn and consider it."

She sauntered on a few steps towards the figure advancing along the road. The spy followed her close. "Try it," he said brutally. "You're a fine woman—you're welcome to put your arms round me if you like." As the words escaped him, he too saw the stranger for the first time. He drew back a step and waited. Miss Gwilt, on her side, advanced a step and waited too.

The stranger came on, with the lithe light step of a practised walker, swinging a stick in his hand, and carrying a knapsack on his shoulders.

A few paces nearer, and his face became visible. He was a dark man, his black hair was powdered with dust, and his black eyes were looking steadfastly forward along the road before him.

Miss Gwilt advanced with the first signs of agitation she had shown yet. "Is it possible?" she said softly. "Can it really be you!"

It was Midwinter, on his way back to Thorpe-Ambrose, after his fortnight among the Yorkshire moors.

He stopped and looked at her, in breathless surprise. The image of the woman had been in his thoughts, at the moment when the woman herself spoke to him. "Miss Gwilt!" he exclaimed, and mechanically held out his hand.

She took it, and pressed it gently. "I should have been glad to see you at any time," she said. "You don't know how glad I am to see you now. May I trouble you to speak to that man? He has been following me, and annoying me, all the way from the town."

Midwinter stepped past her, without uttering a word. Faint as the light was, the spy saw what was coming in his face, and turning instantly, leapt the ditch by the roadside. Before Midwinter could follow, Miss Gwilt's hand was on his shoulder.

"No," she said. "You don't know who his employer is."

Midwinter stopped, and looked at her.

"Strange things have happened since you left us," she went on. "I have been forced to give up my situation, and I am followed and watched by a paid spy. Don't ask who forced me out of my situation, and who pays the spy—at least not just yet. I can't make up my mind to tell you till I am a little more composed. Let the wretch go. Do you mind seeing me safe back to my lodging? It's in your way home. May I—may I ask for the support of your arm? My little stock of courage is quite exhausted." She took his arm and clung close to it. The woman who had tyrannized over Mr. Bashwood was gone, and the woman who had tossed the spy's hat into the pool was gone. A timid, shrinking, interesting creature filled the fair skin, and trembled on the symmetrical limbs of Miss Gwilt. She put her handkerchief to her eyes. "They say necessity has no law," she murmured faintly. "I am treating you like an old friend. God knows I want one!"

They went on towards the town. She recovered herself with a touching fortitude—she put her handkerchief back in her pocket, and persisted in turning the conversation on Midwinter's walking tour. "It is bad enough to be a burden on you," she said, gently pressing on his arm as she spoke. "I mustn't distress you as well. Tell me where you have been, and what you have seen. Interest me in your journey; help me to escape from myself."

They reached the modest little lodging, in the miserable little suburb. Miss Gwilt sighed, and removed her glove before she took Midwinter's hand. "I have taken refuge here," she said, simply. "It is clean and quiet—I am too poor to want or expect more. We must say good-by, I suppose, unless—" she hesitated modestly, and satisfied herself by a quick

look round that they were unobserved—"unless you would like to come in and rest a little? I feel so gratefully towards you, Mr. Midwinter! Is there any harm, do you think, in my offering you a cup of tea?"

The magnetic influence of her touch was thrilling through him while she spoke. Change and absence to which he had trusted to weaken her hold on him, had treacherously strengthened it instead. A man exceptionally sensitive, a man exceptionally pure in his past life, he stood hand in hand in the tempting secrecy of the night, with the first woman who had exercised over him the all-absorbing influence of her sex. At his age and in his position, who could have left her? The man (with a man's temperament) doesn't live who could have left her. Midwinter went in.

A stupid, sleepy lad opened the house-door. Even he, being a male creature, brightened under the influence of Miss Gwilt. "The urn, John," she said, kindly, "and another cup and saucer. I'll borrow your candle to light my candles upstairs—and then I won't trouble you any more to-night." John was wakeful and active in an instant. "No trouble, miss," he said, with awkward civility. Miss Gwilt took his candle with a smile. "How good people are to me!" she whispered innocently to Midwinter, as she led the way upstairs to the little drawing-room on the first floor.

She lit the candles, and, turning quickly on her guest, stopped him at the first attempt he made to remove the knapsack from his shoulders. "No," she said, gently. "In the good old times, there were occasions when the ladies unarmed their knights. I claim the privilege of unarming *my* knight." Her dexterous fingers intercepted his at the straps and buckles; and she had the dusty knapsack off, before he could protest against her touching it.

They sat down at the one little table in the room. It was very poorly furnished—but there was something of the dainty neatness of the woman who inhabited it in the arrangement of the few poor ornaments on the chimney-piece, in the one or two prettily-bound volumes on the cheffonier, in the flowers on the table, and the modest little work-basket in the window. "Women are not all coquettes," she said, as she took off her bonnet and mantilla, and laid them carefully on a chair. "I won't go into my room, and look in my glass, and make myself smart—you shall take me just as I am." Her hands moved about among the tea-things with a smooth, noiseless activity. Her magnificent hair flashed crimson in the candle-light, as she turned her head hither and thither, searching, with an easy grace, for the things she wanted in the tray. Exercise had heightened the brilliancy of her complexion, and had quickened the rapid alternations of expression in her eyes—the delicious languor that stole over them when she was listening or thinking, the bright intelligence that flashed from them softly when she spoke. In the lightest word she said, in the least thing she did, there was something that gently solicited the heart of the man who sat with her. Perfectly modest in her manner, possessed to perfection of the graceful restraints and refinements of a lady, she had all the allurements that feast the eye, all the Siren-invitations

that seduce the sense—a subtle suggestiveness in her silence, and a sexual sorcery in her smile.

"Should I be wrong," she asked, suddenly suspending the conversation which she had thus far persistently restricted to the subject of Midwinter's walking tour, "if I guessed that you have something on your mind—something which neither my tea nor my talk can charm away? Are men as curious as women? Is the something—Me?"

Midwinter struggled against the fascination of looking at her and listening to her. "I am very anxious to hear what has happened since I have been away," he said. "But I am still more anxious, Miss Gwilt, not to distress you by speaking of a painful subject."

She looked at him gratefully. "It is for your sake that I have avoided the painful subject," she said, toying with her spoon among the dregs in her empty cup. "But you will hear about it from others, if you don't hear about it from me; and you ought to know why you found me in that strange situation, and why you see me here. Pray remember one thing to begin with. I don't blame your friend Mr. Armadale—I blame the people whose instrument he is."

Midwinter started. "Is it possible," he began, "that Allan can be in any way answerable ——?" He stopped, and looked at Miss Gwilt in silent astonishment.

She gently laid her hand on his. "Don't be angry with me for only telling the truth," she said. "Your friend is answerable for everything that has happened to me—innocently answerable, Mr. Midwinter, I firmly believe. We are both victims. *He* is the victim of his position as the richest single man in the neighbourhood; and *I* am the victim of Miss Milroy's determination to marry him."

"Miss Milroy?" repeated Midwinter, more and more astonished. "Why, Allan himself told me——" He stopped again.

"He told you that I was the object of his admiration? Poor fellow, he admires everybody—his head is almost as empty as this," said Miss Gwilt, smiling indicatively into the hollow of her cup. She dropped the spoon, sighed, and became serious again. "I am guilty of the vanity of having let him admire me," she went on penitently, "without the excuse of being able, on my side, to reciprocate even the passing interest that he felt in me. I don't undervalue his many admirable qualities, or the excellent position he can offer to his wife. But a woman's heart is not to be commanded—no, Mr. Midwinter, not even by the fortunate master of Thorpe-Ambrose who commands everything else."

She looked him full in the face as she uttered that magnanimous sentiment. His eyes dropped before hers, and his dark colour deepened. He had felt his heart leap in him at the declaration of her indifference to Allan. For the first time since they had known each other, his interests now stood self-revealed before him as openly adverse to the interests of his friend.

"I have been guilty of the vanity of letting Mr. Armadale admire me,

and I have suffered for it," resumed Miss Gwilt. "If there had been any confidence between my pupil and me, I might have easily satisfied her that she might become Mrs. Armadale—if she could—without having any rivalry to fear on my part. But Miss Milroy disliked and distrusted me from the first. She took her own jealous view, no doubt, of Mr. Armadale's thoughtless attentions to me. It was her interest to destroy the position, such as it was, that I held in his estimation; and it is quite likely her mother assisted her. Mrs. Milroy had her motive also (which I am really ashamed to mention) for wishing to drive me out of the house. Anyhow, the conspiracy has succeeded. I have been forced (with Mr. Armadale's help) to leave the major's service. Don't be angry, Mr. Midwinter! don't form a hasty opinion! I dare say Miss Milroy has some good qualities, though I have not found them out; and I assure you again and again that I don't blame Mr. Armadale—I only blame the people whose instrument he is."

"How is he their instrument? How can he be the instrument of any enemy of yours?" asked Midwinter. "Pray excuse my anxiety, Miss Gwilt—Allan's good name is as dear to me as my own!"

Miss Gwilt's eyes turned full on him again, and Miss Gwilt's heart abandoned itself innocently to an outburst of enthusiasm. "How I admire your earnestness!" she said. "How I like your anxiety for your friend! Oh, if women could only form such friendships! Oh, you happy, happy men!" Her voice faltered, and her convenient teacup absorbed her for the third time. "I would give all the little beauty I possess," she said, "if I could only find such a friend as Mr. Armadale has found in *you*. I never shall, Mr. Midwinter, I never shall. Let us go back to what we were talking about. I can only tell you how your friend is concerned in my misfortunes, by telling you something first about myself. I am like many other governesses; I am the victim of sad domestic circumstances. It may be weak of me, but I have a horror of alluding to them among strangers. My silence about my family and my friends exposes me to misinterpretation in my dependent position. Does it do me any harm, Mr. Midwinter, in your estimation?"

"God forbid!" said Midwinter, fervently. "There is no man living," he went on, thinking of his own family story, "who has better reason to understand and respect your silence than I have."

Miss Gwilt seized his hand impulsively. "Oh," she said, "I knew it, the first moment I saw you! I knew that you, too, had suffered, that you too had sorrows which you kept sacred! Strange, strange sympathy! I believe in mesmerism—do you?" She suddenly recollected herself and shuddered. "Oh, what have I done? what must you think of me?" she exclaimed, as he yielded to the magnetic fascination of her touch, and forgetting everything but the hand that lay warm in his own, bent over it and kissed it. "Spare me!" she said, faintly, as she felt the burning touch of his lips. "I am so friendless, I am so completely at your mercy!"

He turned away from her, and hid his face in his hands—he was

trembling, and she saw it. She looked at him, while his face was hidden from her—she looked at him with a furtive interest and surprise. "How that man loves me!" she thought. "I wonder whether there was a time once when I might have loved him?"

The silence between them remained unbroken for some minutes. He had felt her appeal to his consideration as she had never expected or intended him to feel it—he shrank from looking at her or from speaking to her again.

"Shall I go on with my story?" she asked. "Shall we forget and forgive on both sides?" A woman's inveterate indulgence for every expression of a man's admiration which keeps within the limits of personal respect, curved her lips gently into a charming smile. She looked down meditatively at her dress, and brushed a crumb off her lap with a little fluttering sigh. "I was telling you," she went on, "of my reluctance to speak to strangers of my sad family story. It was in that way, as I afterwards found out, that I laid myself open to Miss Milroy's malice and Miss Milroy's suspicion. Private inquiries about me were addressed to the lady who was my reference—at Miss Milroy's suggestion, in the first instance, I have no doubt. I am sorry to say, this is not the worst of it. By some underhand means of which I am quite ignorant, Mr. Armadale's simplicity was imposed on—and when application was made secretly to my reference in London, it was made, Mr. Midwinter, through your friend."

Midwinter suddenly rose from his chair and looked at her. The fascination that she exercised over him, powerful as it was, became a suspended influence, now that the plain disclosure came plainly at last from her lips. He looked at her, and sat down again like a man bewildered, without uttering a word.

"Remember how weak he is," pleaded Miss Gwilt gently, "and make allowances for him as I do. The trifling accident of his failing to find my reference at the address given him seems, I can't imagine why, to have excited Mr. Armadale's suspicion. At any rate, he remained in London. What he did there, it is impossible for me to say. I was quite in the dark; I knew nothing; I distrusted nobody; I was as happy in my little round of duties as I could be with a pupil whose affections I had failed to win—when, one morning, to my indescribable astonishment, Major Milroy showed me a correspondence between Mr. Armadale and himself. He spoke to me in his wife's presence. Poor creature, I make no complaint of her—such affliction as she suffers excuses everything. I wish I could give you some idea of the letters between Major Milroy and Mr. Armadale—but my head is only a woman's head, and I was so confused and distressed at the time! All I can tell you is, that Mr. Armadale chose to preserve silence about his proceedings in London, under circumstances which made that silence a reflection on my character. The major was most kind; his confidence in me remained unshaken—but could his confidence protect me against his wife's prejudice and his daughter's ill-will?

Oh, the hardness of women to each other! Oh, the humiliation if men only knew some of us as we really are! What could I do? I couldn't defend myself against mere imputations; and I couldn't remain in my situation after a slur had been cast on me. My pride (Heaven help me, I was brought up like a gentlewoman, and I have sensibilities that are not blunted even yet!)—my pride got the better of me, and I left my place. Don't let it distress you, Mr. Midwinter! There's a bright side to the picture. The ladies in the neighbourhood have overwhelmed me with kindness; I have the prospect of getting pupils to teach; I am spared the mortification of going back to be a burden on my friends. The only complaint I have to make is I think a just one? Mr. Armadale has been back at Thorpe-Ambrose for some days. I have entreated him, by letter, to grant me an interview; to tell me what dreadful suspicions he has of me, and to let me set myself right in his estimation. Would you believe it? he has declined to see me—under the influence of others; not of his own free will, I am sure! Cruel, isn't it? But he has even used me more cruelly still—he persists in suspecting me—it is he who is having me watched. Oh, Mr. Midwinter, don't hate me for telling you what you *must* know! The man you found persecuting me and frightening me to-night was only earning his money after all as Mr. Armadale's spy."

Once more Midwinter started to his feet; and this time the thoughts that were in him found their way into words.

"I can't believe it; I won't believe it!" he exclaimed indignantly. "If the man told you that, the man lied. I beg your pardon, Miss Gwilt; I beg your pardon from the bottom of my heart. Don't, pray don't think I doubt *you*; I only say there is some dreadful mistake. I am not sure that I understand as I ought all that you have told me. But this last infamous meanness of which you think Allan guilty, I *do* understand. I swear to you, he is incapable of it! Some scoundrel has been taking advantage of him; some scoundrel has been using his name. I'll prove it to you if you will only give me time. Let me go and clear it up at once. I can't rest; I can't bear to think of it; I can't even enjoy the pleasure of being here. Oh," he burst out desperately, "I'm sure you feel for me, after what you have said—I feel so for *you*!"

He stopped in confusion. Miss Gwilt's eyes were looking at him again; and Miss Gwilt's hand had found its way once more into his own.

"You are the most generous of living men," she said softly; "I will believe what you tell me to believe. Go," she added in a whisper, suddenly releasing his hand and turning away from him. "For both our sakes, go!"

His heart beat fast; he looked at her as she dropped into a chair and put her handkerchief to her eyes. For one moment he hesitated—the next, he snatched up his knapsack from the floor, and left her precipitately without a backward look, or a parting word.

She rose when the door closed on him. A change came over her the

instant she was alone. The colour faded out of her cheeks; the beauty died out of her eyes; her face hardened horribly with a silent despair. "It's even baser work than I bargained for," she said, "to deceive *him*." After pacing to and fro in the room for some minutes, she stopped wearily before the glass over the fireplace. "You strange creature!" she murmured, leaning her elbows on the mantel-piece, and languidly addressing the reflection of herself in the glass. "Have you got any conscience left? And has that man roused it?"

The reflection of her face changed slowly. The colour returned to her cheeks, the delicious languor began to suffuse her eyes again. Her lips parted gently, and her quickening breath began to dim the surface of the glass. She drew back from it, after a moment's absorption in her own thoughts, with a start of terror. "What am I doing?" she asked herself in a sudden panic of astonishment. "Am I mad enough to be thinking of him in *that way*?"

She burst into a mocking laugh, and opened her desk on the table recklessly with a bang. "It's high time I had some talk with mother Jezebel," she said, and sat down to write to Mrs. Oldershaw.

"I have met with Mr. Midwinter," she began, "under very lucky circumstances; and I have made the most of my opportunity. He has just left me for his friend Armadale; and one of two good things will happen to-morrow. If they don't quarrel, the doors of Thorpe-Ambrose will be opened to me again at Mr. Midwinter's intercession. If they do quarrel, I shall be the unhappy cause of it, and I shall find my way in for myself, on the purely Christian errand of reconciling them."

She hesitated at the next sentence, wrote the first few words of it, scratched them out again, and petulantly tore the letter into fragments and threw the pen to the other end of the room. Turning quickly on her chair, she looked at the seat which Midwinter had occupied; her foot restlessly tapping the floor, and her handkerchief thrust like a gag between her clenched teeth. "Young as you are," she thought, with her mind reviving the image of him in the empty chair,—“there has been something out of the common in *your* life—and I must and will know it!”

The house-clock struck the hour and roused her. She sighed, and walking back to the glass, wearily loosened the fastenings of her dress; wearily removed the studs from the chemisette beneath it, and put them on the chimney-piece. She looked indolently at the reflected beauties of her neck and bosom, as she unplaited her hair and threw it back in one great mass over her shoulders. "Fancy," she thought, "if he saw me now!" She turned back to the table, and sighed again as she extinguished one of the candles and took the other in her hand. "Midwinter?" she said, as she passed through the folding-doors of the room to her bedchamber. "I don't believe in his name, to begin with!"

The night had advanced by more than an hour before Midwinter was back again at the great house.

Twice, well as the homeward way was known to him, he had strayed out of the right road. The events of the evening—the interview with Miss Gwilt herself, after his fortnight's solitary thinking of her; the extraordinary change that had taken place in her position since he had seen her last; and the startling assertion of Allan's connection with it—had all conspired to throw his mind into a state of ungovernable confusion. The darkness of the cloudy night added to his bewilderment. Even the familiar gates of Thorpe-Ambrose seemed strange to him. When he tried to think of it, it was a mystery to him how he had reached the place.

The front of the house was dark and closed for the night. Midwinter went round to the back. The sound of men's voices, as he advanced, caught his ear. They were soon distinguishable as the voices of the first and second footman, and the subject of conversation between them was their master.

"I'll bet you an even half-crown he's driven out of the neighbourhood before another week is over his head," said the first footman.

"Done?" said the second. "He isn't as easy driven as you think."

"Isn't he?" retorted the other. "He'll be mobbed if he stops here! I tell you again, he's not satisfied with the mess he's got into already. I know it for certain he's having the governess watched."

At those words, Midwinter mechanically checked himself before he turned the corner of the house. His first doubt of the result of his meditated appeal to Allan ran through him like a sudden chill. The influence exercised by the voice of public scandal is a force which acts in opposition to the ordinary law of mechanics. It is strongest, not by concentration, but by distribution. To the primary sound we may shut our ears; but the reverberation of it in echoes is irresistible. On his way back, Midwinter's one desire had been to find Allan up, and to speak to him immediately. His one hope now was to gain time to contend with the new doubts and to silence the new misgivings—his one present anxiety was to hear that Allan had gone to bed. He turned the corner of the house, and presented himself before the men smoking their pipes in the back garden. As soon as their astonishment allowed them to speak, they offered to rouse their master. Allan had given his friend up for that night, and had gone to bed about half an hour since.

"It was my master's particular order, sir," said the head footman, "that he was to be told of it if you came back."

"It is *my* particular request," returned Midwinter, "that you won't disturb him."

The men looked at each other wonderingly, as he took his candle and left them.

Trouville-sur-Mer.

ON the coast of Normandy, in the department of Calvados, and at the mouth of the little river Touques, there has arisen, within the last quarter of a century, the most fashionable watering-place on the French side of the British Channel. According to certain imaginative antiquarians the name is a corruption of *Turris Villa*, but as not a single trace of Roman occupation has ever been discovered, and as no allusion to any such place occurs in any book or manuscript that has yet been brought to light, it is quite as probable that the true derivation of the word may be found in the fact that Trouville was, once upon a time, a hole of a town, and that it is still a town in a hole.

Some forty years ago an eminent artist, named Mozin, roaming through Normandy in search of the picturesque, chanced to alight upon what was then a mere fishing hamlet, and was so charmed with the varied beauties of the site and neighbourhood, that he filled his album with sketches, which became the talk of the artistic and pleasure-seeking world of Paris. His enthusiasm made many converts, and visitors flocked to the spot to judge with their own eyes of the justice of his praises. Their enterprise was well repaid, and every succeeding year has furthered the development of Trouville into its present goodly proportions.

Though the port and original hamlet lie somewhat in a hole, such is by no means the case with the numerous villas and chalets that stud the foot of the cliff facing the sea. For the most part these are built in imitation of the German-Swiss style, and boast of pretty gardens abundantly stocked with flowers; and nowhere do carnations, German asters, petunias, and pelargoniums flourish in greater beauty or profusion. The wild carnation, be it parenthetically remarked, grows luxuriantly on the ruined walls of William the Conqueror's old château at Bonneville. As seen from the pier-head, or from on board the Havre steamer, there are few places more coquettishly picturesque than Trouville. Immediately above the broad expanse of fine hard sand the eye rests upon a broken line of houses, of what may be called the fantastic order of architecture, painted yellow; with bright green venetian blinds, and embellished round the windows with bricks of a deep red hue. A little further off towards the other end of the *plage*, and dotting the hill-side, the dark red-brown of the mingled brick and wood-work of the chalets contrasts pleasantly with the dense masses of verdant foliage in which they seem to nestle, while silver-grey patches of restless, ever-murmuring aspens cast a quivering light over the hill-side and impart a cheerful sensation of life and motion. To the eastward the promontory of La Hève, with

its two lighthouses, stands out boldly and conspicuously, and at times the port and town of Havre-de-Grâce may be seen with tolerable distinctness; but this is a pleasure which visitors little enjoy, for it is the sure harbinger of rain. On the other side, that is, looking down channel to the south-west, an indented undulating coast-line stretches as far as the mouth of the Orne and the mussel-clad rocks known to the cow-keeping Normans as the Vaches Noires.

On the opposite side of the Touques, and connected with Trouville by an excellent ferry and a still more excellent and considerably more modern bridge, a new and yet more fashionable watering-place is rapidly taking form and shape. This highly favoured annexe—for it was a pet of the late Duc de Morny, and is consequently still directly patronized by the Government—bears the name of Deauville, apparently because it is built upon dry sand-hillocks, barbarously levelled to suit the indolent habits of the Parisians. Had Lot's wife been turned into salt while seated in a chair, the example would have been thrown away upon your true Parisian; and it is morally certain, if there be any truth in the doctrine of development, and if in the natural as in the social system a demand will create a supply, that in the next generation, or at the latest, in the one after, the Parisian exquisite, whether male or female, will, instead of legs, be furnished with a chair as a finish to the human figure. The Prince in the *Arabian Nights*, who was marble from the waist downwards, is a fair type of the Parisian beauty of the present day, only that in her case the process of petrification has extended to the heart, compensation, however, being afforded by a corresponding softening of the brain. For all that, Deauville promises to supplant Trouville within a very brief period, and is already beginning to attract the preference of the *crème de la crème*. It enjoys the advantage of a really splendid hotel, of standing in spacious pleasure-grounds and sheltering the new and tasteful Casino. There is also a good sprinkling of comfortable villas, called *pavillons*, while a level terrace, upwards of a mile in length, affords an agreeable promenade at all times of the tide. The Hippodrome—the French equivalent for a racecourse—is likewise within gunshot of the “Hôtel du Casino;” while another advantage is the entire absence of “ancient and fish-like” smells. To English visitors the extent and firmness of the sands, covered in places with a vast quantity of beautiful shells, may be mentioned as an additional attraction; but your genuine Parisian belle asks only for sufficient space to crowd together three or four hundred rush-bottomed chairs. That is her notion of a marine Paradise. With one chair to sit upon, one to rest her feet upon, and one to protect her expansive skirts, she envies not Buddha himself, sitting on his lotus-leaf eternally cross-legged.

In one respect, Trouville will always, perhaps, be preferred to Deauville by families overburdened neither with riches nor offspring. Not only does it possess an ample store of villas capable of containing a Britannic gathering of olive branches, and of testing the resources of even Fortunatus

his purse, but it has also scores of small houses suitable for an exiguous purse, and a party of four or five persons. These may not be magnificently furnished, nor is the parlour adapted for the reception of fastidious company, but they are clean and not incommodious, and are sufficiently supplied with all that one really wants. As there is no entrance-hall, the street-door opens into the sitting-room; but the people of the place are so civil and well-conducted that no annoyance is ever experienced, and even pedlars, and vendors of perishable articles, go round to the back-door. It is true, that as your only window also opens out upon the street, you must either be content to re-consume your own oxygen, or submit to overhear the conversations of your neighbours and be distracted by noises multitudinous. After a little time, however, one becomes interested, in spite of oneself, in the sayings and doings of *le voisin*—not to mention *la voisine*—and the feeling of loneliness that is apt to steal over one in a strange place, full of people more or less known to each other, is chastened down to one of repose and pleasing languor. The furniture of the parlour is decidedly simple. The brick or tiled floor is guiltless of a carpet; but either a large round mat is placed under the table, or a small one is provided for the feet of each individual. A couple of upright arm-chairs, half-a-dozen ordinary chairs, with wondrously hard seats, and two footstools, complete the *moblier*. On the mantelpiece there is, of course, a showy timepiece, between two monster vases, and beyond these, two glass bells, respectively covering the inevitable bandit and equally inevitable shepherdess or flower-girl in evening costume. On the first floor are two good bedrooms, and above that, two other rooms scarcely inferior, and all furnished with capital beds and bedding. The one occupied by the writer of this instructive and amusing narrative, happened to belong to a “capitaine de long cours,” who seems to have been in the habit of bringing home to his wife, after each voyage, some useful token of remembrance. Among the treasures thus accumulated are at least a dozen teapots of all shapes and sizes, a small jug purporting to be “a present from Swansea,” a sugar-basin, commemorating some Odd Fellows’ festival at Manchester, and an enormous pudding-basin, adorned on one side with the view of a bridge over the Wear, and on the other with the following cheerful prayer of a contented mind, springing from a sound digestion and untroubled liver :—

A little health, a little wealth,
A little house of freedom;
And at the end a little friend,
With little cause to need him.

After a brief visit to the wife of his bosom, Captain Pilgrim—that might have been his name had he not been a Frenchman—being obliged to rejoin his schooner, received from his “good lady” a touching proof of the interest she took in his welfare. She had obtained the horns of a large stag-beetle, which she carefully placed on board her husband’s ship, in the sure hope that they would bring him good luck.

The chief objection to these little houses is the thinness of the party walls, whereby a snoring or too musical neighbour becomes a positive nuisance. They likewise swarm with mice, large, swarthy, and as strong-scented as musk-rats. *Item*: there are fleas, lively, hungry, and enterprising. Upon the whole, therefore, an unencumbered couple will do better to go to an hotel—and there are several excellent establishments. The best, perhaps, because commanding the best view of the sea, is the "Hôtel de Paris;" but the "Bellevue" and the "Bras d'Or" are also to be commended. Living is by no means cheap in Trouville, prices being quite equal to those at Paris, with the exception of fruit and vegetables. Fish is scarce, and not choice, as the best is packed up and sent off by rail. The hotels, however, are favoured to a certain extent, and generally provide finer fish than a private family would have any chance of purchasing in the open market.

On Wednesday mornings, the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, in front of the "Hôtel Bellevue," presents a very stirring scene. A large portion of the open space is covered with booths, at which are offered for sale, not only live poultry and all kinds of garden produce of good quality, and in considerable quantity, but also crockery, calico, boots and shoes, woollen goods, baskets of every form, hats, caps, and ironmongery. Iron bedsteads even, and heavy pieces of furniture, are disposed of by auction; and at times the town-crier goes about beating a drum to announce a sale of horses—an episode that is sure to create considerable sensation among the frequenters of the market. In the town itself, however, there is no lack of shops for all kinds of articles of clothing and fancy goods, kept by tradespeople from Paris, who come for the season and take their leave with the swallows. The season, to speak correctly, is supposed to commence on the 15th June, to culminate on the 15th August, and to terminate on the 15th October; after which date the gay and populous town shrinks back into its original aspect of a hamlet of fishermen. Two hotels alone remain half open—the "Bras d'Or" and the "Hôtel de la Plage;" but not even an Englishman has yet been known to brave the monotony of a winter at Trouville—not impossibly because, from its unprotected position—facing every wind that blows by the north from S.W. to E.—it can hardly be regarded as a desirable winter residence.

Independently of the weekly market, or fair, there are peripatetic dealers and hawkers, who make the streets resound with their strangely modulated cries "from morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve." At seven in the morning the postman rattles the handle of the door and shouts aloud, "Fac-teur!" Then a couple of fishwives, carrying between them a large basket of live shrimps, and it may be a smaller one of prawns, utter a sharp shrill cry—"Voilà la marchande de crevettes!" or "Des crevettes! des bouquets!" The first time "the present writer" heard this cry he hastened to secure a nosegay, but discovered that in "ma Normandie" a bouquet means nothing sweeter than a prawn. For reasons possibly not known even to themselves, the Trouville shrimps refuse to

turn red when boiled, and remain in death, as in life, of a greyish brown hue. Next is heard a dolorous and funereal note announcing the advent of a "needy knife-grinder," or a coaxing female voice invites you to buy her apricots, or "reines-claude." Presently an old woman appears in the wake of an almost stately donkey, laden with baskets of fruit and vegetables. Scarcely has the ass and his driver passed when a hand-barrow comes trolling along, and an individual with a facetious voice bellows out—"Zolis bas! Zolis bas! Demandez, m'sieurs et dames! Bas! Chaussettes!" The demand for woollen goods, such as stockings, socks, comforters, jerseys, and petticoats for children, appears to be incessant, bright colours being preferred to those of a sober hue. And now a brisk rattling sound, caused by a loose iron handle striking against a flat piece of wood, gives notice of the approach of "*La marchande de gauffres*," with her sweet vanilla-flavoured dainties in a tin, inscribed "*Vivent les plaisirs de Bordeaux!*" And so it goes on all day, varied now and then by a ragged urchin with a cracked hurdy-gurdy, or the scraping of the fiddle of one of the musicians of the "*Salon*," patiently practising his part in a concerted piece.

The aborigines are a fine manly race, with broad shoulders and bull necks, and with a thoroughly English cast of countenance—blue eyes, fair ruddy complexions, hair bordering on red, and a frank, honest, kindly, straightforward aspect and demeanour. Bold, hardy sailors, they manage their splendid fishing-boats with the courage and address of the old Northerners, but on shore they are the gentlest and best-natured creatures in the world. There are few more pleasing sights at Trouville than to watch these Herculean fellows standing at the doors of their cottages, each with a baby in his arms, or going out for a stroll with a little fellow toddling by his side and engrossing his whole attention. It is true they are not much troubled with the petty annoyances of a humble household, the greater part of their time being passed at sea; and no doubt the occasional repose from toil and danger exercises a soothing influence on their rugged, uncultured natures. The house exactly opposite the one in which these lines are written, is inhabited by a small colony of fishermen and their wives, with a sprinkling of little ones, who are not always "good" in the nurserymaid's acceptation of the word. When anything goes wrong in this department of the human menagerie, a middle-aged man, the father of two of the married women, undertakes to restore peace and harmony, by playing after a fashion with the fractious delinquent. The baby he continues to pacify, by shouting to her as if he were hailing the mast-head—"Ha! Marie! Ha! p'tite! Ha! diddy-dee! Paw, paw, paw, row-ri-ri-row, row-ri-ri-row, r-r-r-row,"—the last syllable being jerked out something like the bark of a mastiff. Loud voices, it must be owned, are one of the worst defects of these sea-dogs, and their woman-kind have also picked up the habit of screaming like seagulls before a storm. Never was there a more sober race of men. When they do indulge in anything more exciting than bad "*café au lait*," it is in cider;

but during a six weeks' residence not a single tipsy man has been seen. And the least thing amuses them. One evening a fishing-boat missed her opportunity of getting clear out to sea, and was obliged to run high up on the sands. All the next day she lay there idle and inactive, while her crew of three men and a boy, instead of repairing to a public-house, passed the time in playing at hop-sotch, in throwing summersaults, and in swinging on a rope hanging from the bowsprit. When the wind and tide are unfavourable the boats are towed out to the end of the pier by a long file of women, whose white cotton nightcaps go bobbing up and down in a most ludicrous fashion. How these poor women do work! A large portion of the labours of the field is done by them, and—not for that reason, let us hope—nowhere in England will you find the land so neglected, or so overgrown with coarse weeds. When the tide is out and the river Touques carries its waters to the sea unpolluted with brine, there may be seen on either bank groups of women kneeling in little boxes, and bending over the stream, dragging the dirty linen through the running stream, or beating it upon a board placed before them. And on highdays and holidays how these women do dress out themselves and their children! It is pitiable to look upon it, for it shows what an evil influence is being exercised upon the lower strata of society in this place by the fertile example of the Parisian visitors. To the extravagant costumes of the latter it is impossible to do justice by any attempt at description, and they are equally beyond caricature. The most delicate silks are worn as recklessly as if they were but bombazine. How many changes of costume take place in a single day, Bishop Colenso himself would be puzzled to enumerate. The effect of such bright and varied colours is pleasant enough for the spectator whose "withers are unwrung" by the milliner's bills; but how these bills can ever be paid is one of those things which, as Lord Dundreary would say, no fellow can understand. Bonnets are unknown, except among a few English ladies, and here and there in the case of a grandame. But, on the other hand, every variety of hat is worn, with every variety of ornament. The dress and the petticoat are equally smart and fanciful, and seem to try which shall be the shortest. From the ear enormous gold plates are suspended by way of ear-rings, and in the hand a long white polished cane of holly, or cornel wood, is carried to assist the yellow-booted feet in tripping over the hundred yards that lead from the house to the sands. That goal once reached, the party pounce upon as many chairs as they can seize without a personal encounter with some other party equally considerate, and then settle down for an hour or so's incessant chatter. The canes are laid each over its own chair, umbrellas are opened out, and every well-dressed person who passes is subjected to a critical analysis as to the taste and costliness of her attire. When this amusement is exhausted they mount, always with the aid of the white cane, the half-dozen steps leading up to the terrace or verandah of the salon; and there again settle down like a covey of partridges. A few

stroll into the reading-room and carry off the best papers—it being of course strictly forbidden to remove them under any pretext whatever. But this is the only reading in which they ever indulge. And their industry is on a par with their love of letters. Some German ladies having appeared in public with network baskets, it suddenly became the fashion to be seen with baskets of a similar pattern, but it is doubtful if they contain anything but bonbons and chocolate. Twice a day there is instrumental music—a little thin perhaps, but decidedly good so far as it goes. Dancing lessons, also, are given, and every evening from eight to nine there is a pupils' ball, for the edification of cynical bachelors. Every Sunday and Thursday night there is a ball in the principal saloon, at which a dozen or twenty gentlemen figure with young ladies in round hats and short skirts—the cane being left to take care of the chair. Each dance seldom exceeds ten minutes in duration, at the end of which the cavalier conducts his partner to her cane, bows, and retires; but there is no attempt at conversation, and such a solecism as an interchange of ideas would be deemed ill-mannered and impertinent. It is nearly always the same men who venture to exhibit their “fantastic toe,” while the bulk of their compeers look on disdainfully from the doorway. There is little, if any, intercourse between the two sexes. It is not only married people who keep apart, but the unmarried also appear indifferent to each other's society; nor is there any of that delectable “spoonying” which is the great charm of an English watering-place. The consequences of this rapidly increasing alienation are naturally prejudicial. The women have become selfish, frivolous, and supercilious, while the men are growing coarse, egotistical, and regardless of everything but money and sensual enjoyments.

In addition to the regular balls and concerts at Trouville, there are frequently extra nights, uncovered by the subscription to the salon, on which more stately balls are given (though even at them full dress is not indispensable), and likewise scenic representations when a dramatic planet can be induced to gravitate in this direction. Besides, there is a theatre, in external appearance not unlike a Methodist chapel, and from time to time a *messe en musique* is announced at one or other of the churches, after which a collection is made by lady-patronesses in the gayest and most coquettish attire. Now and then, too, a choir will visit the place for a couple of days' sea-bathing, and cover their expenses by a musical mass, the collection after which is equally divided between themselves and the church favoured by their choice. Then, as if all this gaiety and dissipation were not enough for one season, the visitors have the pleasure of witnessing a race between fishing-boats, all the way from Havre, and—if the weather permit—of seeing a tolerable display of fireworks on the evening of the fête of St. Napoleon, once revered as the anniversary of the assumption of the Virgin Mary. Even if the weather be unfavourable, it is only a pleasure deferred until the following day; and, be it fine or wet, they can at least listen to a salvo of artillery, fired

during the celebration of the *Te Deum*. Nor is this all. On two consecutive days the Deauville racecourse gathers together all that is beautiful and sublime in the twin watering-places, and, according to the *Journal de Trouville et de Deauville*, "Epsom and Ascot do not offer greater attractions for real amateurs, or assemble a more numerous or more select crowd." The running is at least fair and above-board, and the horses seem to go quite as fast as their riders dare let them. In one particular race, for which five horses started, the leading jockey was perched like a monkey on his beast, No. 2 sat rigid and bolt upright, and No. 3 was trying to rise in his stirrups as if trotting, while the fourth and fifth were courteously contending which should be the hindmost.

It has already been said that the sands on either side of the harbour are admirable for their extent and firmness. It follows, therefore, that the bathing is good, especially for ladies, but it is also peculiar. The bathing-ground is equally divided into three "quartiers." One is set apart exclusively for ladies, attended or not by professional "baigneurs;" the next division is for men and women mixed; and the third for men only. The actual barrier between the different quarters is a rope. It is required, however, that in the "quartier commun," the men should don a costume nearly similar to that worn by the ladies, leaving only the arms bare, and the legs from the knee downwards. In the men's quarter a simple *caleçon* is held sufficient, though certainly not so decent as a Bengalee's dhoty. But the funniest part of the business is, that ladies go up the rope and converse across it with their unclad acquaintances of the other sex—the conversation being held in rather less than twelve inches of water. Very few venture in above "the giant bole," but the fair sex is also the most daring, and will occasionally disappear up to the waist. As a rule, the men prefer a mixture of sand and water, like the cockles, and will lie down in the back-water left by the receding tide, where the depth varies from three inches to a foot. An extra charge is made for a *cabane à flot*, that is, for taking the machine down to the water's edge, but the majority content themselves with the machines that are drawn up high and dry, and run like lamplighters over the intervening space of a hundred yards or so, past admiring groups of spectators, male and female. This, to our notions, odd proceeding bears at least one good fruit. As the feet, even if protected by list shoes, get covered with sand in racing back from the sea, it is customary to place in each machine a foot-pail of hot water, than which nothing can be imagined more refreshing or wholesome.

No matter how strong a swimmer you may be, you cannot go beyond a certain easy distance from the shore. Two boats are kept continually moving up and down to prevent any rash, adventurous spirit from getting beyond his depth; and after all it is perhaps just as well that no one should be permitted to drown himself, to the annoyance of his neighbours. A favourite amusement, however, with men who are known to be stout swimmers, is to hire a double canoe, connected by a raised

bridge or seat, and propelled by a double-headed Indian paddle. In these, or rather, on these, caleçon-clad heroes disport themselves even in the ladies' quarter, paddling in and out in all directions, seated on high, and, with the exception of the aforesaid dhoty, as naked as on the day they were born.

At the eastern extremity of the Trouville sands are a range of low rocks covered with mussels and anemones—the latter in great variety. Towards Villerville, a tiny watering-place two and a half miles distant, whether by the road or the rocks, a queer-looking anemone may be picked up among the weeds. It is the size of a crown-piece, and is covered with a thick green leathery hide. Its feelers are seldom displayed, but it turns out of its interior economy a sort of transparent bladder, beautifully marked with thin filaments. The sea-cucumber may also occasionally, but rarely, be found on the Deauville sands, and only after a stiff gale from a particular quarter. From the gravel and blue clay of the cliff above the Trouville rocks, innumerable specimens of gryphites, echinites, ammonites, and other fossils may be gathered in very perfect and beautiful condition; but one solitary English couple alone were ever seen troubling themselves with these memorials of another age and another clime.

In the neighbourhood of Trouville are many delightful walks and rides. To the English visitor the still interesting remains of William the Conqueror's castle at Bonneville will prove almost as attractive as the field of Waterloo to a tourist at Brussels. The forest of St. Gatrin, too, is a tempting place for a picnic, while along the coast there is a pleasant drive to Honfleur in one direction, and to Villers in the exactly opposite one. The flourishing seaport town of Havre-de-Grâce, with its pretty marine suburb of Ste. Adresse, will likewise furnish abundant amusement for a couple of days, and the passage across may be effected daily in less than an hour for the trifling charge of fifteenpence. The easiest access to Trouville from England is by way of Southampton to Havre, and thence by steamer across the mouth of the Seine. The journey, however, from Paris lies through one of the most fertile districts of France, and is accomplished in little more than four hours.

Maori Sketches.

THE present stagnation of the New Zealand war is scarcely more satisfactory than the sanguinary skirmishes of last year. The events in the colony which we had hoped to civilize according to the newest recipe are eminently vexatious. If the operations of our troops had been more successful, we might comfort ourselves with the theory that we were administering with kind energy that *coup de grace* which some suppose to be the best mercy of civilized towards uncivilized nations. Distinguished bishops, eager in missionary enterprise, could be "thankful that new districts were opened to the Gospel by our arms," if the progress of our arms had not been so halting. But we cannot sing *Te Deums* when some hundred tattooed savages hold at bay some thousand of our best troops. We are puzzled by our failure. Those among us of an inquiring spirit try to comprehend Auckland politics, but our leading articles, in which we put our trust, give forth an uncertain sound, and do not rejoice over British deeds in New Zealand as loudly as usual. The aborigines' protectors prick our consciences by their pamphlets and protests. The colonists cut holes in our purse which we do not even know of till two months after the event. Yet surely in these affairs we have done nothing particularly wrong or stupid. We have sent out one of our best generals, who commands ten thousand of our best troops. Sir George Grey seems to us, if not to Sir D. Cameron, to do tolerable justice between the advancing civilizers and the retreating savages.

But it is unaccountable that these unreasonable persons should defy equally our philanthropy and our rifles. They break from our Christianity and "rush" our pickets. What sort of men are these Tamihanas and Neros that call themselves Thompsons and Naylor. Outlying colonists say that they are half-tamed cannibals with European vices and Maori lawlessness. Nor can we, in the face of late events, altogether contradict the report. Friends of humanity, with the anger proper to philanthropists, reply that our troublesome insurgents are nature's noblemen and our superiors. We could debate the question more at our ease if every mail did not increase our uncertainty as to our actual position in Wanganui and Taranaki. We grow impatient about a difficulty that costs so much. We should be glad to know that we were to receive no more telegrams headed "repulse of our troops," or even "slaughter of the Ngatamaniapotos;" but as such news may come any month we are driven to ask what are these Maories? Missionary reports, State papers, and pamphlets without end—mostly written to contradict each other—do not help us much in our inquiries. We still wonder why our savages are so deaf to the call of "progress." When we were good enough to make the treaty of Waitangi why did they

not instantly cast their tattooed skin, with its barbaric heraldry? They might have had our law if they would come to Auckland for its benefits. Why should they want a king when there are pakeha squatters who might give them British-colonial justice? It is strange that they do not see the excellence of our language and the beauty of its pliable abstractions. We almost despair of Maori nature now that they have replaced our Thirty-nine Articles by Pai Marire, and have got an Angel Gabriel of their own. What sort of man is this, to be so un-English and yet so brave?

Notwithstanding the three or four hundred volumes of New Zealand literature that exist, and the strong expression of Maori nature since 1860, we think most people will confess their ignorance of it, and may be glad of an introduction to some trustworthy sketches of "Old New Zealand," that tell us what Maori character is under its present partial and misapplied varnish. We have found in the narrative of a settler who landed in the Bay of Islands before the present confusion of Maoridom had begun, some of the many clues to our present embarrassment.* We gladly listen to a gentleman who has known how to gain such influence among the Maories, that when lately there were fears in Auckland of an outbreak among the northern tribes, eight hundred natives offered to fight under his orders. His success in earning, after long residence among them, their respect and confidence, shows that individual Englishmen may do much at once for the Maories and for themselves, while our complex form of government signally fails. English associations cannot well avoid taking for their rule English standards of conduct, and the earlier settlers and missionaries protested with reason against our system of regular government as being incomprehensible by the natives. It was, however, necessary to establish British law for the weekly tide of colonists that flowed in according to a law of supply and demand that no aborigines protection society can alter.

The settler from whose experiences we mean to quote largely, landed in Auckland not long after those days when trading ships, on anchoring, were forced to run up boarding nets. One of his first acquaintances was a rangatira, or gentleman, who had carried home fragments of the French captain Marion-Dufréne as tit-bits to his family, when that officer with sixteen of his crew were massacred according to the law of Utu. Another chief, who became afterwards a fast friend to the pakeha (foreign) rangatira, had earned for himself the surname of "Eater of his own relations." The Maories were just beginning to appreciate the advantages of European trade, though gold pieces were still chiefly used as ear ornaments. Our guide among them in these primitive times was, before he left his ship, taken possession of by a chief who was eager to increase the resources of his tribe with the iron and fish-hooks and gunpowder that the pakeha might have. The settler's first act on landing probably did much to establish the prestige or "mana" which he afterwards enjoyed in his adopted tribe. He defeated a young chief in fair wrestling, and learned that his new com-

* *Old New Zealand*. Auckland, 1863.

panions thoroughly understood "fair play." He was ready to sympathize with their anxieties when they were expecting the arrival of a threatening "taua" or war party. It had been away for two years at the south, and we presume it had maintained itself without an extravagant commissariat. During its absence the now penitent tribe to which our pakeha was attached had attacked two of the hapus which had furnished to the taua a contingent of fighting men. Peace had since been formally made, but the return of the taua was an anxiety. They worked as we have lately seen that Maories can work, and strengthened the defences of their 'pa' or fort while the women provisioned it. Its triple line of fence was lashed as usual with the tough creeping plant we call supple jack to about eleven feet from the ground. It was planned with due attention to "curtains," flanking angles and traverses, for all of which the Maori language has names. When all was complete, the pakeha, who describes himself as not ignorant of our best masters of fortification, found out that his friend the "relation eater," who could neither read nor write, who had never heard of Cohorn or Vauban, could teach him certain practical contrivances well worth knowing.

The taua at last came up, and both sides went, with perfect solemnity, through various forms of defiance. They were careful to do all with strict attention to law and without needless insult. We have heard that in our war of 1845 they were painfully astonished at our soldiers, who in their attack cursed and swore at their Maori foes, though, said they, "we had certainly done nothing wrong." War-dances followed the arrival of the taua, of which our readers have probably often read the description. Peace was afterwards proclaimed, and next day, after much feasting, there was great embracing, and floods of very insincere tears were shed by both parties. We suppose that our formidable foe Rewi hardly requires, among his other demands, a similar demonstration from Sir Duncan Cameron on the occasion of our next truce in Wanganui.

By very slow degrees, and with much difficulty, the pakeha came to understand some of the laws of his new countrymen. They would have remained, probably, as incomprehensible to him as they seem to be to modern officials at Auckland, if he had not been a practical sufferer, alike by their enforcement and their neglect. In many of their customs explanation may be found of the present Maori alienation from us, and we are glad to set before our readers a sketch, however slight, of one or two among them. The settler whose account we follow is, we believe, better versed in native law than most colonists, even of his standing. Among the first branches of legislation with which he became acquainted was the law of "muru," or licensed robbing. To become a proper subject of muru he had first to become a New Zealand proprietor—not by confiscation, but by due bargain and sale.

There were about fifty different claimants to the ground he purchased. One man said his ancestors had killed off the first owners, another declared that his forefathers had driven off the second party; a third man, who seemed to be listened to with more than ordinary respect,

asserted that his ancestor had been the first possessor of all, and had never been ousted, and that this ancestor was a huge lizard that lived in a cave on the land many ages ago, and certainly there was the cave to prove it. One man required payment because his ancestors, as he affirmed, had exercised the right of catching rats on it, but which he (the claimant) had never done because there were no rats to catch except pakeha rats, which did not count as game. Another claimed because his grandfather had been murdered on the land, and another because his grandfather committed the murder. There was also to impede the sale an ancient wahi tapu, or burying-ground, that had not, however, been used for two hundred years. Three months' negotiation and a great "lot of trade" was necessary to complete the transaction, which seemed at last to have been considered "tika" (correct) by the natives. Would that the Waitara and Tataraimaka blocks had been gained with the same attention to "correctness." The native land-leagues, which seem unmanageable by any amount of "trade," might in that case not have formed, as they do now, the chief grievance of the colonists. It would, however, in any case have been long before our Maori subjects could have comprehended our Chancery system, their minds being already preoccupied by their own legal mysteries.

The old law of muru has fallen into partial disuse, probably because the natives are better supplied with the necessities of life than when we first were acquainted with them. The constant struggle they were forced to maintain for the means of existence made them proportionably greedy of any property that was moveable. Before their possession of iron—and their knowledge of iron is not a hundred years old—the labour spent in making the simplest tool was enormous; utensils of every kind became precious to them in a degree we hardly comprehend. Every man coveted his neighbour's goods, and perpetual warfare existed as a matter of course. The race became distinguished by its military character. The necessity of hard work, combined with the necessity of fighting, and the advantages of a temperate climate, gave the Maories strength of body and an energy and perseverance that is very remarkable. They felled the tough Kauri pine with their rude blunt stones, and at a great expense of labour, time, and ingenuity, they carved from it a masterpiece of art, and an object of beauty, the war canoe. It was capable of carrying a hundred men on a distant expedition through the rough seas that surround New Zealand. The fifty years of excitement that the Maories have passed through has greatly injured their moral and physical condition. When the first straggling traders appeared along their shore speculation was intense as to their cargoes. The oracle was consulted and the ship was followed along the coast at any risk. The first craving of the natives was for muskets and gunpowder, for the existence of a tribe depended on its supply of ammunition. Competition between rival chiefs was almost unbounded, and we can easily believe the hardships undergone in preparing the large quantities of flax required

in payment for the European goods. Neglect of other crops and much starvation followed: a fresh craving resulted for instruments of husbandry, for clothing, and for iron tools to replace the common ones, that the overtasked people had not been able to supply. Pakeha manufactures became a necessity, and lately the Maories have discovered that money best ensures possession of all they want. They continually torment themselves with plans for getting large sums at once, without the trouble of patient industry. Nor have they been altogether unsuccessful. Money is always forthcoming when they have an opportunity of buying ammunition, and we lately heard of a chief who gave three hundred sovereigns for six hundred boxes of percussion caps.

"Muru" is not so practicable now as when the Maories' property consisted mainly in clothing and tools and arms. But this law of plunder was once continually enforced as a sort of compulsory fine for offences. Some of the accidents which were counted crimes seem to us hardly punishable. But the Maories seem to have lost no occasion on which property might be legitimately circulated. If a man-child fell into the fire, and was severely burned, its father was immediately plundered to an extent that left him almost without the means of existence. His fishing-nets, his canoes, his pigs, and provisions were seized in payment of the damage that his tribe and his wife's family were supposed to have received by the loss of a male child. It is only lately that the Maories have set much value on their female infants.

Again, if the canoe of a native was upset and some of his family were drowned, the like muru was enforced, with perhaps a severe beating besides. As the neighbours who carried out the law were equally receivers of the fine and judges of its amount, it is easy to see that a Maori's chattels were a very shifting possession. But these executions were never objected to. It would in many cases have been felt as a slight not to be robbed, and to resist except as a form would have debarred the foolish sufferer from the privilege of robbing his neighbours in their turn. As a matter of honour if personally attacked he might inflict a flesh wound, but it would not have been "tika" that on these occasions any one should be killed. By the law of muru a coat that a Maori got from a trading captain has been known to pass through the hands, or rather over the backs of six different owners, and finally return to its original purchaser. The exchanges had been effected by due legal process. The settler from whose reminiscences of pre-colonial New Zealand we have quoted largely, relates how he was himself disturbed by a friend's voice shouting one early morning, "Get up, get up! I will kill you this day. You have roasted my grandfather! get up, stand up!" The pakeha turned out spear in hand, and saw his friend armed with a bayonet on the end of a long pole. The offended grandson came on with assumed fury, made some smart bangs and thrusts, which were parried by the disturbed Englishman, and then explained how his grandfather had come to be cooked. The pakeha was glad to compromise by payment of two whole

bags of shot, two blankets, divers fish-hooks, and certain figs of tobacco. A heinous crime had indeed been committed. The pakeha had on a journey made a fire at the foot of a tree, in the top of which the bones of his friend's grandfather had once been deposited, but from which they had been removed ten years before.

Cases of accidental manslaughter by a Maori of a member of his own tribe was punishable by muru, and by wholesale plunder of the criminal and his family. Murder of an enemy was on the whole meritorious, and murder of a slave of no consequence. Malicious assassination of one of the same tribe was rare, and punishable by utu, or the law of retaliation—a law, however, seldom enforced, not being so profitable as that of muru to the executors of its decrees.

As a makeweight to the tyranny of muru the law of tapu, or as we commonly say, taboo, was useful. It seems exceedingly complicated, and must have led to numberless misunderstandings with the early colonists. Evidently having its source in the great value of labour, it was framed to preserve the chattels obtained at such cost of human toil from being stolen or mislaid, or spoiled by children, or handled by any person. Deadly sickness was believed to be the certain punishment for breaking the tapu, unless the crime was involuntary, when the chief, or a tohunga (priest) could remit the consequences—somewhat in the manner that the Levitical priesthood performed the ceremonies necessary in the cleansing of the Jews. For many reasons we are not surprised that the Old Testament commends itself rather than the New to Maori capacity and prejudices. But from this predilection of theirs many inconveniences arise, as our readers can easily imagine. To give an instance of tapu. A chief of very high rank, and “mana,” or prestige, was on a war expedition, by which his own personal tapu was increased two-fold, as was that of all the warriors who were with him. The party halted to dine. The portion of food set apart for the chief in a basket was more than enough for him, and the greater part remained unconsumed. The “taua” having dined moved on, and soon after a party of slaves and others who had been in the rear, came up carrying baggage. One of the new comers, a stout hungry fellow, seeing the chief's unfinished meal, ate it up before asking any questions. He had hardly finished when he was told by a horror-stricken comrade, who had remained behind when the warriors of the taua continued their march, of the dreadful act he had committed. The unfortunate delinquent was remarkable for courage, and had signalized himself in war. No sooner did he hear the fatal news than he was seized with extraordinarily violent convulsions and cramp in the stomach, which did not cease until he died about sundown the same day. To compensate for its evident uses tapu had its inconveniences. A man of any standing could not carry provisions on his back, or if he did they were useless to any one but himself. If he went into a kitchen—which was only excusable on some great emergency—all the pots, ovens, and food became useless. He might light a fire for warmth, but if he had blown upon it, it could not be used for any com-

mon purpose, not even to light a pipe. If a chief whose tapu was strong asked at a pakeha's house for a draught of water, and it was unwittingly given to him in a glass or cup, the Maori rangatira was bound to break it or to carry it away, to the disgust of the European lender. The proper way to give water in such a case was to pour it from a height of one or two feet into a funnel, made by the chief's hand, who nodded his head when he had enough of the cataract.

A severe tapu, amounting to excommunication, attached to those who handled or buried the dead. In every populous village there was generally a wretch who, to escape other labour, or for some personal reason, performed the duties of an undertaker. He was therefore seldom clear of the dangers of the tapu. Old, haggard, and ragged, daubed with red paint, which is the Maori funereal colour, he might be seen sitting all day forty or fifty yards from the village thoroughfare. Twice a day food was thrown to him to gnaw as he best could, without using his hands. At night he crept into some lair of leaves and rubbish. We do not wonder when we hear that the poor wretch was often half insane. The priest's tapu was of a somewhat different sort. Our "spiritist" readers will be interested in some details of the "tohungas'" pretensions to converse with disembodied persons, and to occasional possession by an oracular spirit. Their familiar speaks in a sort of hollow whistle, and gives answers that are either most ingeniously double in their meaning, or else curiously exact in their truth.

Pai Marire is not astonishing when we remember that professed converse with familiar spirits accompanied the ill-digested Christianity of the Maories. More than one pakeha has formally consulted the oracle, and paid a high fee to the priest; nor are we surprised at this, for the Maories seem to be in advance of us, if not of our French and American cousins, in spiritism. On sufficient payment, the tohunga will even undertake to call up the spirit of any dead person. We give the story of a young chief who had been killed in battle. He had been very popular, and much respected in his tribe, and at the request of several of his nearest friends the tohunga promised to evoke his spirit, that it might answer certain questions they wished to put. The priest was to come to the village of the relations, and the interview was to take place in a large house common to all the population. The chief was the first of his tribe who could read and write. He kept a register of any remarkable events that occurred in his village. The book containing it could not be found, though his friends had searched unceasingly for it, both for its own interest, and its writer's sake. The hour appointed by the tohunga came, and at night all those interested met the priest in the house agreed upon. Fires were lighted, which gave a flickering light. The priest retired to the darkest corner. All was expectation, and the silence was only broken by the sobs of the sisters and other relations of the dead man. They were heart-breaking in their violence, while the grave silence of the men showed that to them it was a serious interview. The brother of the chief now and then wiped his eyes as they filled with tears.

About thirty persons were seated on the floor, among whom was the Englishman who relates the scene, and who found his incredulity giving way before the solemnity of the occasion. The fire gradually burned down to mere glowing charcoal, and the light was little better than darkness, when suddenly a voice came out of the gloom. "Salutation! salutation to you all! salutation! Salutation to you, my tribe! Family, I salute you! Friends, I salute you! Friend, my pakeha friend, I salute you!"

The feelings of the assembled persons were taken by storm. A cry expressive of affection and despair, such as was not good to hear, came from the sister of the dead chief, a fine, stately, and really handsome woman of about five-and-twenty. She would have rushed in the direction from whence the voice came, had not her brothers forcibly restrained her. She lay then moaning and fainting on the ground. At the same instant a young girl who was also held back by main force, cried out,—“Is it you? Truly is it you? They hold me, they restrain me, they watch me; but I go to you. The sun shall not rise! The sun shall not rise!” She fell insensible on the rush floor, and, with the other girl, was carried out. Then the spirit was heard again,—“Speak to me, the tribe; speak to me, the family; speak to me, the pakeha!” At last his brother said,—“How is it with you? Is it well with you in that country?” The answer came in strange, melancholy accents, like the sound of wind blowing into a hollow vessel. “It is well with me: my place is a good place.” The brother asked him if he had seen persons whose names he mentioned. “Yes; they are all with me.” There were some more questions and replies and directions by the spirit as to the disposal of his gun and his large tame pig. Then the pakeha asked where the missing book could be found. Its exact position in the thatch over the door was given. The chief's brother rushed out and found it, and brought the book in his hand. Soon after the spirit said, suddenly—“O tribe, farewell! My family, I go.” A general cry of farewell arose from all present. “Farewell!” again cried the spirit from deep below the ground. “Farewell!” again from high in the air. “Farewell!” once more came moaning through the distant darkness of the night.

All the people present dispersed, and quiet had been restored to the village, when the report of a musket broke the silence. The villagers, hastily armed, rushed towards a flame which was springing up, where a shed had been hastily set on fire to make a light. In the verandah of the house next to it an old man supported the dead body of the young girl who had said that she would follow her chief to the other world. She had secretly procured a loaded musket, pulled the trigger with her foot, and leaning on the muzzle, she had destroyed herself.

There was evidently decrease in the Maori population before our knowledge of them, as is testified by the large ruined hill forts, that must have required for their habitation and tenure far greater numbers than the scattered tribes of modern New Zealand. Without laying all the blame of their present gradual extinction to European disease and vice, the change in their habits caused by the use of the musket has been for their

injury. No longer forced to live on heights from which they came down to work every day in the plains, they have made their villages in the centre of their farmed land. They build their oven-like houses sometimes in mere swamps, where the water springs with the pressure of the foot. The heated atmosphere of their low huts, sometimes not more than five feet high, appears very fatal to children, and whole communities die out within two generations.

Perhaps the worst moment of their transition is over, but many causes yet exist, if not removed, for the future ruin of the Maories. Nor have we, who boast the introduction among them of our high civilization and our "progress," been able to rescue our dependent savages from the evils we have introduced to their country. Must we not question the reality of the benefits we profess to impart; or, at least, excuse the less enlightened Maories if they refuse them in some instances? Our present difficulties in New Zealand have chiefly arisen from the theory that by the treaty of Waitangi in 1840 the Maori nation agreed to hold their land under the Queen's gift, which constituted their new and sole title to it. We treat the independent tribes as if they had been for eight hundred years versed in our jumble of feudal and modern ideas. We assume that, by Captain Hobson's agreement, New Zealand is Crown property. Let us see what a northern chief thought of this celebrated charter of our sovereignty.

"Then came a chief of the Pakeha, who we heard was called a Governor. We were very glad of his arrival, because we heard he was a great chief, and we thought, he being a great chief, would have more blankets and tobacco and muskets than any of the other Pakeha people, and that he would give us plenty of these things for nothing. The next thing we heard was that the Governor was travelling all over the country with a large piece of paper, asking all the chiefs to write their names or make marks on it. We heard also that the Ngapuhi chiefs, who had made marks or written on that paper, had been given tobacco, and flour, and sugar, and many other things for having done so. We all tried to find out the reason why the Governor was so anxious to get us to make these marks. Some of us thought the Governor wanted to bewitch all the chiefs; but our Pakeha friends laughed at this, and told us that the people of Europe did not know how to bewitch people. Well, it was not long before the Governor came, and with him came other Pakeha chiefs, and also people who could speak Maori; so we all gathered together, chiefs and slaves, women and children, and went to meet him; and when we met the Governor, the speaker of Maori told us that if we put our names or even made any sort of a mark on that paper, the Governor would then protect us, and prevent us from being robbed of our cultivated land and our timber land, and everything else which belonged to us. Some of the people were very much alarmed when they heard this, for they thought that perhaps a great war expedition was coming against us from some distant country to destroy us; others said he was only trying to frighten us. The speaker of Maori then went on to tell us certain things, but the meaning of what he said was so closely concealed we have never found it out. One thing we understood

well, however, for he told us plainly that if we wrote on the Governor's paper, one of the consequences would be that great numbers of Pakehas would come to this country and trade with us, and that we should have abundance of valuable goods. We were very glad to hear this. We also believed what the speaker of Maori told us, because we saw that our old Pakeha friends who came with us to see the Governor believed it. After the speaker of Maori had ceased, then Te Tao Nui and some other chiefs came forward and wrote on the Governor's paper, and Te Tao Nui went up to the Governor and took the Governor's hand in his and licked it! We did not much like this, we all thought it so undignified; we were very much surprised that a chief such as Te Tao Nui should do so; but Te Tao Nui is a man who knows a great deal about the customs of the Pakeha. He has been to Port Jackson in a ship, and he, seeing our surprise, told us that when the great Pakeha chiefs go to see the Queen of England they do the same, so we saw that it was a straight proceeding. But after Te Tao Nui and other chiefs had made marks and written on the Governor's paper, the Governor did not give them anything. We did not like this, so some other chiefs went forward and said to the Governor, 'Pay us first, and we will write afterwards.' A chief from Omanaia said, 'Put money in my left hand, and I will write my name with my right.' But the Governor shook his head and seemed displeased, and said he would not pay them for writing on the paper. Now, when all the people saw this they were very much vexed, and began to say one to another, 'It is wasting our labour coming here to see this Governor;' and the chiefs began to get up and to make speeches. One said, 'Come here, Governor; go back to England;' and another said, 'I am governor in my own country, there shall be no other;' and Paapahia said, 'Remain here and be governor of this island, and I will go to England and be King of England; and if the people of England accept me for their king, it will be quite just; otherwise you do not remain here.' Then many other chiefs began to speak, and there was great noise and confusion, and the people began to go away; and the paper was lying there, but there was no one to write upon it. The Governor looked vexed, and his face was very red. At this time some Pakehas went amongst the crowd and said to them, 'You are foolish; the Governor intends to pay you when all the writing is done, but it is not proper that he should promise to do so; it would be said you only wrote your names for pay; this, according to our ideas, would be a very wrong thing.' When we heard this we all began to write as fast as we could, for we were all very hungry with listening and talking so long, and we wanted to get something to eat, and we were also in a hurry to see what the Governor was going to give us. I and all my family made our marks, and we then went to get something to eat, but we found our food not half done: so when I saw that the food was not sufficiently done, I was aware that something bad would come of this business. I got for myself next morning—and for all my sons and my two brothers, and my three wives—only two blankets. On our way home we went ashore at the house of a Pakeha and got a pen and some paper, and my

son, who could write, wrote a letter for us all to the Governor, telling him to take back the blankets, and to cut our names out of the paper. It is, however, no matter; what is there in a few black marks? who cares anything about them? Well, after this the Governor died. He was bewitched, as I have heard, by a Tohunga at the south, where he had gone to get names to his paper, for that was his chief delight, to get plenty of names and marks on his paper. The paper with all the names was either buried with him, or else his relations may have kept it to lament over, and as a remembrance of him. If it is gone to England, it will not be right to let it be kept in any place where food is cooked, or where there are pots or kettles, because there are so many chiefs' names on it. It is a very sacred piece of paper: it is very good if it has been buried with the Governor."

On this valuable document, signed after this fashion by a fraction of the Maori chiefs, rests our claim to the submission of tribes who have never seen it. Ought we to strain the interpretation of such a "treaty?"

We believe that the Protestantism, perhaps more than the Christianity, of such men as the Waikato chief Tamihana, is very real. In his language, and to a certain extent in his conduct, he reminds us of the Puritan country gentlemen of our rebellion. But it is hard for us who are trained in European ideas to understand the effect of early Jewish history and abstract dogma on a race primitive as might have been the children of Gog, yet inheritors of so lengthened a past of violence and bloodshed. It is evident that they are attracted by the ancient Hebrew annals, to which they give their religious sympathies. They may not vex our bishops with theological disputes, such as the Zulu Kaffir originated; but they find more troublesome objections in Jewish precedents to our laws and government. A Hittite or a Perizzite might, with less anachronism than a modern English subject, have obeyed the instructions of a Maori god to the Ngapuhi in 1845. "You must particularly," said the Atua, or spirit, "observe all the sacred rites and customs of your ancestors; if you neglect this in the smallest particular, evil will befall you, and I also shall desert you. You who pray to the God of the missionaries, continue to do so, and in your praying see that you make no mistakes. Fight and pray. Touch not the spoils of the slain, abstain from human flesh, lest the European God should be angry, and be careful not to offend the Maori gods. It is good to have more than one god to trust to. This war party must be strictly sacred. Be brave, be strong, be patient." The Atua who so advised was of great help in a subsequent fight, by turning away the rockets and other balls from his followers. As for our "pot guns," or mortars, the natives believed at that time that their only purpose was to produce deafness in the adversary, and to keep him from sleeping. At the risk of being considered behind the New Zealand age we multiply traits of Maori thought twenty years ago, for we think they show us in some degree what is still the mental state of our insurgents. Twenty years such as those the Maories have passed can have but slightly modified the instincts of a race. Can we expect that the religious reverence of Rewi or Wi Kingi is deeper seated than that of our formidable antagonist

Heke, who led the war of 1845? "What care I," he roared out in battle, "for either men or spirits? I fear not; let the Fellow in heaven look to it. Have I not prayed to him for years? It is for him to look to me this day." Yet Heke had been a nominal Christian for many years. When we talk of Maori Christianity, we must not think even of the brilliant and liberal sister of King Matutue, Te Paea, as of a Lady Jane Grey, or of Wi Tamihana as a "judicious Hooker."

It is not to be expected that from colonial reports we should hear much of Maori poetry. Their late armed resistance has earned for the natives a "nigger" hatred, Yankee in its expression, nor even in England do we expect much sympathy with the Taillefers of Maori chivalry; yet we cannot but pause in our hurried sketch to quote the speech of Te Anu, the best spearman of the Ngapuhi, when, during the war of 1845, his friend was killed in battle by our troops:—"Farewell, Hauraki! go, taking with you your kindness and hospitality, your generosity and valour, and leave none behind you who can fill your place. Your death was noble; you revenged yourself with your own hand; you saved yourself without the help of any man. Your life was short—but so it is with heroes. Farewell, O Hauraki, farewell!" "At this time it was night," continues the Maori who describes Hauraki's end, "and the sister, and also the young wife of Hauraki, went in the dark and sat beside the river. They sat weeping silently, and spinning a cord wherewith to strangle themselves. The flax was wet with their tears. And as they did this the moon arose; so when the sister of Hauraki saw the rising moon, she broke silence and lamented aloud, and this was part of her lament:—

"It is well with thee, O Moon! You return from death
Spreading your light on the little waves. Men say, 'Behold the moon
But the dead of this world return no more. [re-appears.]
Grief and pain spring up in my heart as from a fountain;
I hasten to death for relief.
Oh! that I might eat those numerous soothsayers
Who could not foretell his death.
Oh! that I might eat the Governor,
For his was the war!"

We are relieved to find that the singer's desire to eat the Governor was not generally approved. The lament, which was very popular at first, was suppressed by the Maori authorities as not "tika."

We have wished to show our readers some scattered traits of what the Maories were before they gained even their shallow varnish of nominal civilization. We must remember that even the Tamihanas to be found in New Zealand, remarkable as they are for intelligence and even noble feeling, are not the less heirs as Maories to a recent barbarism. Have we attempted to understand our savage subjects, when we thrust on them our perfections? Have we a right to exterminate them if in places they have returned to crimes and superstitions that, however horrible, have not been unanticipated by those who knew an elder generation? Their very virtues are as different from ours as their cannibalism is unlike our state ceremonies. Splendid courage they have shown—a quality that we hope is common to our troops and their warriors. Their dash, in one or two

actions, has been equalled to the charge of Balaklava. At Te Ranga, last summer, we heard how they deliberately retired with the order of the finest troops in the world, though they were being shot down by scores. Many of them turned round, folded their arms on their chests, bowed their heads and received their death-wound in silence. There must be remarkable moral force behind this calm courage.

We do not intend to discuss late events in New Zealand, though it is plain that there is much to criticize in the manner with which we have offered what we assume to be beneficial institutions to this alien race. We do not generally shine as examples of sympathy and courtesy in our dealings with strangers, and our ignorance of the Maories has been excessive. Even those who studied their history scientifically seem to have been careless of the living Maori nature. We seem to know still less about them since they have adopted broadcloth and pale ale. Those sanguine among us think that they are ready for our machinery of life, and cannot perceive its dangers and even foolishness for them. Government edits newspapers in Maori, that a "public opinion" may be created. Yet what is public opinion likely to be in the swamps and bush to which our "land sharks" are driving the natives? We have not much faith in the trash necessarily published under such conditions. Our tattooed subjects as yet do not understand that the editorial language, to which we are so used that we make due allowance for its figures of speech, is not wilful and active deception and insult. We do, on the whole, pretty well with our laws, which have grown with our growth. We are trained, to use a quaint Maori saying, to fear the five pounds (fine), if we do not fear a higher power; but our customs are of no use to this barbarous people, and we give them no other, not even a vote in the Assembly, of which they are told to worship the perfection. Yet their faith in our institutions is touching; they try to govern by their village runangas, or parliaments, and the ancient influence of the chiefs is ruinously weakened by the "public opinion" thus created. The runangas legislate in a fashion hardly imaginable by those who believe a parliament to be your only machine for law-making. These democracies, for the chiefs follow and do not lead the general vote, issue edicts on every possible subject. They regulate, with like gravity, social etiquette and international law; they arrange sumptuary rules and ecclesiastical disputes; they follow by turns the Ten Commandments, ancient Maori law, and English Acts of Parliament; while some more original legislators develop a private code for their hapti out of their own self-consciousness. It is not extraordinary that no one should obey Maori decisions, and we have not enforced any other even in the districts within sight of Auckland. There never appears to have been obedience of any sort in Maori-land. The children, as we have seen, are a sort of common property of the tribe. Knowing that if their father punished them, they would be backed by relations eager to enforce the muru, it is not likely that young Maories practise even the usual filial submission.

Let us confess that we have introduced Anglican theories of Christi-

anity into the chaos of native ideas with the same effect as if we set a starved beggar down before a civic feast. The Maories are of the date of those ancient races who struggled for existence in the age of stone. We have nearly destroyed them with the sudden influx of our iron, and still worse of our gold, which we persist in thinking is the remedy for all savagery. The Maori revolt is the more excusable that it is instinctive. The chiefs probably could not prevent it. They cannot check that intense attachment to their land—their “mother,” as the Maories call it—which belongs to races that have not yet become commercial. The Maories fight for their soil, and the customs connected with it, and make land-leagues such as the Irish might have attempted eight hundred years ago—such as they would perhaps organize even now were they fifteen thousand miles from the Horse Guards. “Land is a living thing,” say the Maori thinkers, “and man is mortal.” We must acknowledge the good reason our barbarian dependants have for their resistance to the swarm of hungry new comers who would change the ti tree jungles into East Lothian or Norfolk farms.

Our civilization and our religious teaching seem to be alike failures, which leads us to doubt if our civilization and our religious teaching, as exhibited in New Zealand, are of the best sort. The hopeful reports of our missionaries lose their rose colour in presence of the Pai Marire religion, which has become almost universal among the insurgent tribes. The story of its invention shows that our Maori converts who can discuss the mysteries of Calvinism, and who even wear white waistcoats and possess photographic albums, are not, after all, far removed from the late believers in Maui, the Atua (god) who fished up New Zealand from the sea, and is dead a long time ago.

The new prophets of Pai Marire tell the story of its revelation thus:—A boy lying awake at Taranaki heard a voice which directed him to go to Wanganui and get a white shirt from a certain store there. To the boy's remonstrance that he had no money and knew no one there, the voice replied that he was to go, nothing doubting, and he would there meet a Jew who would give him further instructions. He went, the storekeeper let him have the shirt, and a man touching him said, “You want me.” The boy declared that he had come for nothing else. The Jew gave him twelve books to read, but he could not understand the first ten. The last two volumes, however, made everything clear to him, and he found himself able to speak all languages on the earth. Certain ceremonies were instituted, such as dancing round a pole, waving the hands, and speaking, or rather uttering sounds which they call Hebrew. The Angel Gabriel is to fight for all the followers of their new religion, to which all Maories are invited to become converts, except the Aropa and William Naylor's tribe. Those who refuse will fall dead, if not converted by a certain date. The Pakehas are to be exterminated. All the apostles of the new religion are invulnerable. If the Pakeha fires at them, his rifle bullets will turn and kill himself. If he point a sword at them, it will pierce his own body. His round shot and shell will be caught by the priests and flung back at him with greater force than powder can exert.

The Angel Gabriel is to enforce the new doctrines on pain of death if they are disbelieved. Fresh articles of faith, more and more debasing in their tendencies, are at will promulgated by the head prophet of the superstition.

The creed is convenient under the existing circumstances of the Maories, and they have certainly acted in many late instances as if they firmly believed its truth. But it is hardly reconcilable with even the broadest Anglicanism. The Maories, who use, as they did at Tauranga, texts as formulas of incantation, when about "to lay an ambuscade," or to "build a fortification," or to "relieve the wounded," are scarcely prepared for the religious developments of the nineteenth century.

Our readers will, we think, be inclined to agree with us that the Maories are suffering now from a surfeit of Europeanism, if we may coin the word, that is quite unsuited to their situation. In the failure of our system of government, which most writers on Maori affairs allow to be complete, their wish for a king to look after them is reasonable, if rebellious.

We give no opinion on the arguments of some that, if the English troops be withdrawn, the Maories will be unfairly dealt with by the colonists, nor on the wish of others to proceed in Maori affairs by what is called the sugar-and-flour policy. Nor do we criticize our English wish to fence off the barbarians, and leave them to their own "little wars" outside a pale that the colonial militia should keep inviolate. We think that much might still be made of Maori loyalty if an Englishman could be found sufficiently uncivilized to earn their confidence in his straightforward regard for their welfare. It is probable that this people cannot comprehend abstractions of law and order; but they might love a lawgiver and a chief. Why should they not have a lieutenant-king, who would, as young King Matutuere has done, pray, according to the Book of Common Prayer, that the Queen may vanquish and overcome all her enemies, and seal his prayer with emphatic *Amens*? "The first confidence," says Sir W. Martin, late chief-justice of the colony, "must be a confidence in persons." If our European training render a search for the necessary "person" difficult, why should not the Maories have Tanihanga or Matutuere, now that they have confessed the Queen's supremacy, for their viceroy? Why should they not make "land-leagues," if it so please them, until in due time they find their profit in legitimate sale of their country? Might not the colonists shift for the present with the southern island, which is larger than England and Wales? Let them be content to govern themselves, possessing, as they do, all the newest political inventions.

Our readers will understand why we have not dwelt on the details of the late missionary murder, or on the general recoil of the Maories from the civilization we have offered to them. The traits of their recent past, of which we have reminded our public, check astonishment, even though their present be at least a disappointment.

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